

Shahak: Risk of terrorism in Gaza higher than in past

IT is currently easier for hostile elements to organize and plan attacks against Israelis in the Gaza Strip than in the past, Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak told settlers in Neveh Dekalim yesterday.

Shahak, accompanied by OC Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz, met with settlers a day after seven roadside-bombs were discovered and defused by sappers in the Gaza Strip.

"There is no 100 percent security in

ALON PINKAS
and HERB KEINON

Jerusalem and the situation here is such that it is simpler for hostile elements to organize and attack Israeli targets," Shahak told the settlers.

The meeting was the first between Shahak and the Gaza Coast Regional Council. The settlers said that they are subject to an increasing number of attacks and that their security is

deteriorating, partly because the Palestinian Authority is not doing enough to enforce the Cairo agreement.

Council head Zvi Hendel said that much of the discussion dealt with how to enforce implementation of the Oslo agreement.

"The Palestinians are not implementing the agreement," he said, "not in the security sphere, and not in the civilian sphere. The IDF should deal with implementation much more than it is doing now."

Student confesses to killing Feingold

KIEV (AP) — A university student has confessed to killing Jewish Agency emissary Shimon Feingold, who came to his apartment to complain about loud music, police here said yesterday.

Ukrainian authorities said the 21-year-old's confession convinced them that the crime was not politically motivated.

"There was no political content to this incident — there wasn't and there cannot be," Interior Ministry spokesman Oleksandr Ivashchenko told journalists.

The suspect, whose name was not released, was arrested Sunday morning and charged with manslaughter.

While in police custody, the student confessed to hitting Feingold, 46, in the head after he came to the student's fourth-floor apartment, just above Feingold's, complaining of loud music and dancing.

Police said the blow caused Feingold to slip on the stairs, and he fatally hit his head on a step.

The student, who was specializing in physical education studies at Kiev State University, admitted to being very drunk at the time.

Ivashchenko called it "violent impudence which cost an Israeli citizen his life."

Other students in the building who had been taken into custody were released, police said.

Amir Rozenblit adds: Feingold was buried yesterday at Kibbutz Hatzorim.

In his eulogy, Acting Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg said: "How is it possible, O God in heaven, that a quarrel between neighbors became the cry of an entire people? Why do the good die and why is there no end to evil?"

Major pays flying visit to the North

DAVID RUDGE and LIAT COLLINS

BRITISH Prime Minister John Major had a bird's eye view of Israel's security problems along Lebanese and Syrian borders during a flying visit to the North yesterday.

Major was given a briefing by OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine and later by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

He was hosted at the Pe'er observation point, not far from Kibbutz Manara, which overlooks parts of Lebanon and the Hula Valley, with the snow-capped Mt. Hermon and the Golan Heights opposite.

But Major had little time to take in the scenery, as Levine explained the strategic threat from Syria and the daily terrorism emanating from Lebanon.

Rabin noted that during his stint as OC Northern Command from 1956-59, the Syrians controlled all of the Golan Heights and they made life for residents in the Hula and Jordan valleys "very miserable."

"It was a terrible period," Rabin told his guest, adding that the situation had changed after 1967.

Major also attended a ceremony to mark the dedication of an English language resource center recently opened at the Djanogly High School in Upper Galilee.

The fact that the center had been named the John and Norma Major resource center brought a smile to Major's face, and he hoped he and his wife would have the opportunity of visiting it.

Major also visited the Knesset, where he was received with full honors.

Having sat in on a plenum session, Major joked that he envied Speaker Shevah Weiss, who only has to suffer interruptions from 120 MKs, while there are more than 600 British MPs.

Major also met with the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. He reportedly told the committee that he found it "extraordinary" that he is only the second British premier to visit Israel, add-



British Prime Minister John Major answers reporters questions after a visit to Yad Vashem. (Brian Hendler)

ing that the frequency of the visits should be increased.

On the peace process, he reportedly said that the road would not be easy, but that there is no return. He apparently advised Israel to make more use of Britain's relations with Arab countries, and said it should use its friends in the international community to promote its interests.

An-Najah economist disputes Israeli figures on Palestinian unemployment

JOSE ROSENFELD

PALESTINIAN unemployment figures issued yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics are willfully misleading and seriously underestimate the extent of joblessness and economic distress in the territories, an An-Najah University economics professor has charged.

According to the bureau, unemployment in Judea and Samaria, excluding Jericho, averaged 7.3 percent last year, with male joblessness reaching the amount of 8.6%. By contrast, Prof. Hisham Hawartani quotes a Palestinian employment survey which found that unemployment totaled 47% in the West Bank and 58% in Gaza.

"Such deviation in the figures for average unemployment is not benign anymore. We originally thought it was a methodological

error, but now we see that it is more than that. They want to send a message to the media and the World Bank that the situation is not so bad," said Hawartani.

Central Bureau of Statistics spokesman David Neuman stood behind the figures, saying that the survey is based on the same definitions and questions as those used in surveying employment in Israel.

Hawartani agreed that under the Israeli definition, unemployment is even lower than 5% in the West Bank, since people find "unconventional or illegal jobs" to subsist. Unlike Western economies which provide the jobless with unemployment benefits, Palestinians do not receive them, he said.

Neuman rejected the contention that the different economic conditions between Israel and the territories and the fact that very few Palestinians register with the Employment Service affected the validity of the bureau's survey.

The economic situation in the territories is bad with "serious consequences for [Yasser] Arafat, [Yitzhak] Rabin and ordinary people," said Hawartani. However, "Palestine is not Somalia; there is no starvation, although in Gaza the situation is much more serious," he added.

According to the bureau, an average of 47,000 Palestinians a week worked in Israel last year, with an additional 6,000 working in Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria. The number of Palestinians working in the West Bank grew 16% to 172,000.

US Marines training in Negev

ALON PINKAS

US Marines and other units are training in the Negev desert and practicing a model of rapid deployment in the region, the IDF and the US Embassy confirmed yesterday.

Such exercises have been conducted in the past by Marine Corps units and were code-named "Nouvelle Shirley."

The IDF Spokesman said that "The US military is conducting land, air and sea exercises in Israel within the framework of mutual agreements between the two countries. The US forces are using IDF installations and conduct such exercises from time to

time."

US Embassy spokesman Richard Scorza told the Associated Press that 7,500 US troops from several military services were involved in the training.

Scorza said ships and aircraft were also taking part in exercises that will continue until the end of the month.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two killed in road accidents

Anat Hoffman, 32, of Tzur Hadassah, was killed yesterday morning when her car swerved out of its lane and hit a cement mixer head-on near the Ein Kerem junction. Police said Hoffman was probably speeding.

In Beit Jala, a 3-year-old boy was killed when the minibus that brought him home from nursery school hit him while traveling in reverse. The bus driver was held for questioning.

Railroad switchman crushed to death

A railroad switchman was crushed to death yesterday evening while hooking up railroad cars on the tracks at the entrance to the railroad yard at Hof Shemen in Haifa. In another work accident, three construction workers from Ramallah were lightly injured yesterday when the roof of the building they were working on collapsed. The building, in Jerusalem's Beit Hanina section, is to be a basketball arena. The workers were taken to the government hospital in Ramallah.

Peace Now urges building ban

THE ministerial committee on settlements, set up in January to monitor building in Jewish communities in the territories, is scheduled to meet today to deal with building in Kiryat Sefer, Har Adar, and Betar.

Peace Now yesterday sent messages to each of the eight ministers on the committee asking them to prevent additional building in the settlements.

"We ask you to do everything you can to prevent this retreat from the government's peace policies," Peace Now wrote. *Herb Keinon*

MAJOR

"We are aware of their concerns."

White House spokesman Mike McCurry, also said the US and Britain still enjoy "a warm and special relationship."

In Jerusalem, Major met Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in the morning. He then addressed a British-Israeli business symposium and visited Yad Vashem, before traveling by helicopter to the Golan Heights.

Britain is committed to continued diplomatic and economic aid to both Israel, Palestinians, and other Arab peace partners, aimed at enabling them to move forwards in the peace process, Major said.

He said that in the coming days he plans to announce a new aid package for the Palestinian autonomous areas and Jordan.

"The development of economic activity and the prosperity that this brings is the best and surest antidote to terrorism," he said.

Peres agreed, telling the business symposium "We must try to handle fundamentalism...not with the sight of a gun, but with economic involvement."

He proposed that the British help fund one of several proposed industrial parks in the autonomous and administered areas.

"Prime Minister Major was very favorable to the idea," Peres said, after meeting the British leader.

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With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our dearly beloved husband, father, grandfather and brother

Rabbi Dr. LOUIS BERNSTEIN

The funeral will take place today, March 14, 1995 at Beit Shimon Cemetery at 5:15 p.m., following the arrival of El Al flight no. 008, scheduled to arrive at 4 p.m. Transportation from Jerusalem, leaving at 4 p.m. from Beit Meir, and at 4:15 p.m. from Binyanei HaUma. Please confirm time by calling 02-272548. The Bernstein, Zalberg, Peretz and Kern Families. Shiva at the Zalberg residence, 2 Hameshorim St., Jewish Quarter, Jerusalem.

The Rabbinical Council of America and The Rabbinical Council of America Israel Region mourn the great loss of their president

Rabbi LOUIS (ELIEZER) BERNSTEIN

A loss to Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael

Rabbi Rafael Grossman, First Vice-President, RCA; Rabbi Solomon Sharfman, President, RCA, Israel Region; Rabbi Steven Dworkin, Executive Vice-President, RCA; Rabbi Naftali Hollander, Director, RCA, Israel

The National Institutions Jewish Agency for Israel World Zionist Organization We are saddened by the loss of our colleague, a true friend of Israel

Rabbi LOUIS BERNSTEIN

May his memory be a blessing

Mendel Kaplan, Chairman, Board of Governors; Avrum Burg, Chairman, Executive

Yeshiva University Faculty, Administration, Students and Alumni mourn the loss of

Rabbi Dr. LOUIS BERNSTEIN

educator and leader in Zionist courses.

May his family be consoled amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

EDUCATIONAL CENTERS IN ISRAEL OF THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA Gan-Yavne Youth Village Yeshivat Achuzat Yaakov The Roshei Yeshiva, Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students mourn the untimely passing of

Rabbi LOUIS ZALMAN BERNSTEIN

President of the Rabbinical Council of America and Chairman of the American Committee of the Yeshivot during nearly four decades (1960-1995).

He was a guiding light to his students, his congregants, his colleagues, to American Orthodoxy, to Religious Zionism and to the thousands of former and current students of Yeshivat Hadarom and Yeshivat Achuzat Yaakov who benefited directly from his love and concern. He will be missed by all.

May the Almighty comfort Rabbi Bernstein's dear family among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Rabbi Reuven Aberman, Chairman, Educational Centers; Rabbi Tzvi Moshe Galinsky, Director General

The United Israel Office (U.I.O.) mourns the passing of

SHIMON FEINGOLD

an emissary of the Jewish People who sought out his brothers and helped bring them to their homeland.

Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our dear husband, father and grandfather

Prof. JONAS GREENFIELD

The funeral will take place today, March 14, 1995, leaving at 12 noon from Sanhedria for Har Hamenuhot, Givat Shaul.

Mourning by: His wife, Bella; His daughters, Elisheva Padwa, Abigail Goldgeler and families

Shiva at the home of the deceased, 8 Aharoni St., Jerusalem.

The Director, Officers, Trustees, Staff and Fellows of the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research deeply mourn the loss of our good friend, colleague and Albright Trustee

Prof. JONAS C. GREENFIELD

and extend heartfelt condolences to Bella and her family.

In deep sorrow we announce the passing of

ABRAHAM BERNARD

OLIVESTONE

of London, England

Wife: Helen Olivestone, London

Sons: Ellis and Chava Avriel, Kibbutz Lavi

Cedric and Liz Olivestone, Rehovot

David and Cell Olivestone, New York and grandchildren

The funeral will take place at Kibbutz Lavi tomorrow, Wednesday, March 15, 1995.

For time please call: 06-799211

Shiva at Kibbutz Lavi

Shetreet to reform burial, marriage, conversion

HERB KEINON

RELIGIOUS Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet hopes to implement changes in the way some people are buried, registered to marry, and converted, he told a press conference yesterday.

He came out in favor of a special cemetery, where he said the 120,000 non-Jewish immigrants who have arrived in recent years can be buried.

"We are talking about immigrants who are not allowed to be buried in Jewish cemeteries, and since they are not registered as Christians, are not let into Christian cemeteries either. This is a human problem. There is no possibility of burying them. The ministry is responsible for finding an operative solution," Shetreet told a press briefing.

Shetreet said that the ministry is also obliged to follow a 1992 ruling by the High Court of Justice regarding the setting up of a secular cemetery. The court had ordered the ministry to issue a site to the Menucha Nechona burial society. This has yet to be done, but on Sunday the ministerial committee for alternate burial decided to allocate land for a secular cemetery near Beersheba.

Shetreet said he will also place private burial societies under the supervision of the government.

He said he would also open up for public review the ministry's "black list" of people ineligible for marriage for halachic reasons. Most people are on the list because they are suspected *mamzerim* (the offspring of forbidden unions).

Shetreet said that people on the list, who generally are not notified of their inclusion until they try to register to marry, will be informed in advance that they are on the list, and will have the right of appeal. He also said that the ministry will not use anonymous information to add people to the list.

He will also work to speed up the conversion process, he said, adding that many new immigrants who want to convert are forced to wait more than a year, and that this is unacceptable.

Shetreet said he realizes he is limited in the reforms he can bring about in the ministry because his term is unlikely to last beyond the next elections. However, he said, he hopes to bring about changes in the way the ministry is run.

In this vein, he said, the committee he is setting up to re-evaluate the criteria for funding institutions will be formed by the end of the week. Shetreet yesterday appointed Gershon Metzger as the ministry's acting director-general, replacing Ze'ev Rosenberg, who quit soon after Shetreet took over two weeks ago. Metzger formerly served as director-general of the Science Ministry.



Bertha Steimatzky and her son Ari hold copies of the medal marking the book distributor's 70th anniversary yesterday, as Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation chairman Uzi Narkiss looks on. The medal (inset) features the image of the late company founder Yehezkel Steimatzky and various symbols, including Rodin's 'The Thinker,' Michaelangelo's 'Moses,' a figure of Herzl, and other items on one side. On the other, books form the letter S and the number 70, with the family name and the words 'Seventy years of culture 1925-1975.' (Yitzhak Elharaz/Scoop 80)

Top teachers in South may receive double pay

AMIR ROZENBLIT

EXCEPTIONAL teachers will be offered personal contracts at up to twice the regular salary and improved working conditions if they agree to teach in peripheral areas, particularly in the South, Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein announced yesterday during a visit to Beersheba.

The goal of the plan, which is to start next school year, Rubinstein said, is to improve *bagrut* scores in these areas, particularly in mathematics, English, and Hebrew.

Ministry Director-General Shimon Shoshani said that

some 900 elementary and 200 secondary teachers would be employed on such contracts in the next school year. Their salary will be up to double the current average monthly gross salary of NIS 5,000.

Rubinstein said the salaries of teachers on such personal contracts will be determined by the specific qualifications of the teacher and the distance he or she will have to travel to get to school.

The ministry has set a goal of

having half of high school graduates earning *bagrut* certificates by the year 2000. Rubinstein, however, said the goal could be achieved sooner.

He also said that at least half of the graduates of teachers' colleges are not working in education, and that the new program is designed to bring the best of them back into the field.

Rubinstein added that, parallel to the new program, his ministry would launch an intensive public relations campaign to improve the standing of the teacher in society.

Gozansky petitions against reduction of parallel tax

EVELYN GORDON

THE planned 1.95 percentage point reduction in employers' parallel tax (*mas makbil*) is illegal, because tax rates can only be changed by law, and not by administrative fiat, MK Tamar Gozansky (Hadash) charged in a petition to the High Court of Justice yesterday.

The cabinet decided to reduce the parallel tax, which helps fund the National Insurance Institute, from 4.95% to 3% in January, following passage of the national health tax. The money is to be made up by the government out of an expected increase in tax revenue and cuts in government employment.

However, Gozansky noted, the

Basic Law: The State Economy states explicitly that "taxes... and other obligatory payments shall not be imposed, nor shall their rates be altered, except by law or according to a law."

Currently, the Parallel Tax Law states that the tax should be 4.95%. Therefore, for the cabinet to change this rate by fiat, rather than by amending the law, violates the Basic Law: The State Economy, Gozansky said.

This law, she added, represents a fundamental constitutional principle: that taxes should only be imposed by the legislature.

The petition also noted that

Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair, in an opinion on the legality of reducing the tax by cabinet decision, agreed that this move contradicted the law, but said it should be permitted anyway out of policy considerations.

The condition of the economy, the opinion said, "justifies a deviation from the rules laid down in the Basic Law: The State Economy regarding changes in tax rates."

Gozansky also argued that the tax reduction represented an unfair subsidy to employers and the self-employed. If taxes are being reduced, she said, they should be reduced for employers and employees equally.

Jonas Greenfield, expert linguist, dies at 68

Jerusalem Post Staff

PROF. Jonas Greenfield of the Hebrew University, an authority on ancient semitic languages and on the Dead Sea Scrolls, died yesterday at age 68.

The American-born scholar had served since 1976 as editor of the *Israel Exploration Journal*, the first non-archaeologist ever to hold that post, and was a member of the Dead Sea Scrolls Supervisory Committee of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

His interest in ancient tongues began when he was a student at the Mesivta Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn, New York. At age 14, he purchased a grammar of Babylonian Aramaic.

After graduating yeshiva, he studied English literature at City College in New York and then began graduate studies in English at Yale University in New

Haven.

In addition to a required course in Old English, he decided to study Hittite. He was soon studying Akkadian as well and before long had dropped English altogether for ancient Near Eastern Studies. At Yale, he began his career in Dead Sea Scrolls research under Millar Burrows, one of the first scholars to deal

with the scrolls.

His teaching career began at Brandeis University, where he introduced Ugaritic into the curriculum. He moved on in time to UCLA and Berkeley.

In 1971 he and his family made aliya. Since then he taught in the Department of Ancient Semitic Languages at the Hebrew University.

He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and six grandchildren.

Ben-Porat to assess polygraph security tests

EVELYN GORDON

STATE Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat should prepare an opinion on the effectiveness and propriety of polygraph tests, the Knesset State Control Committee decided yesterday.

The committee made this decision after hearing a defense of the tests from the head of the Defense Ministry's security department.

The department head, whose name is classified, said the tests are effective and even essential in indicating potential problems of trustworthiness in candidates.

In addition, he said, people are often deterred from committing crimes by the knowledge that they are likely to be subject to a polygraph test at any moment.

He said people who refused to take polygraph tests almost always have something to hide. However, he admitted, this "something" is not always job-related.

He advocated using polygraphs not only in posts involving state

security but also in sensitive financial positions.

He rejected the opinion of Defense Ministry legal adviser Elyakim Rubinstein and Judge Advocate-General Ilan Schiff that polygraph tests violate the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom. More traditional forms of investigation, which involve questioning a person's acquaintances about his past and examining his medical and financial records, constitute a much greater invasion of privacy, he said.

The head of the ministry's audit department, Aviezer Ya'ari, noted that the reliability of polygraph tests is continually increasing, and added that he had always thought it natural to administer these tests to people in sensitive positions.

Committee chairman David Magen (Likud) said Ben-Porat's opinion would deal with a wide range of issues, including whether polygraph tests should also be used on people in sensitive financial posts.

Louis Bernstein remembered for devotion to community

MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK

RABBI Louis Bernstein, a prominent figure in American Orthodox communal life who died on Sunday, was remembered as a man who served the broader Jewish community while remaining close to his own congregants.

"He had the dogged determination and ability to divorce himself from the personal and look at the communal," said Rabbi Steven Dworkin, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Council of America, the organization representing centrist Orthodox rabbis. "He worked day and night on behalf of the Jewish community."

"Even though he had an impact on the

Jewish community nationally and internationally, he never outgrew his local community," said Manny Behar, director of the Queens Jewish Community Council.

"He could speak to a prime minister one day and then about a shelter in the neighborhood. He was there when the local community needed him."

Bernstein, who was born in New York in 1922, was the three-time president of the

RCA, chairman of the executive of the American Mizrahi-Hapoel Hamizrachi movement, a member of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors, and a professor of Jewish history at Yeshiva University, his alma mater.

In 1953, after serving as a US Army chaplain for two years during the Korean War, Rabbi Bernstein became the spiritual leader of Young Israel of Windsor Park, in Bayside, Queens, where he continued to serve until his death.

Bernstein is survived by his wife and four children. He is to be buried today in the Eretz Hahayim Cemetery near Beit Shemesh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bezek workers asked to explain sanctions

Tel Aviv Labor Court will today ask 12 Bezek technicians to explain why they have refused to return to their jobs despite back-to-work orders it issued last week. Twelve more will appear before the court tomorrow and 16 more the next day.

The process of deciding whether strikers are in contempt of court is very slow. Hundreds of Bezek technicians have refused to repair phone lines around the country over the past two weeks, but the court asked for a list of 40 as a first step. The court could then set fines, but even these may not induce the strikers to return to work. And this may not frighten the other strikers to halt sanctions.

Bill changes treatment of sexual offenses

The Knesset last night passed a law which will drastically affect the way court hearings on sex offenses are handled.

According to the law, sex offense cases will be heard by a panel of three judges, not one. Victims will be able to present a review of the harm caused to them before the attacker is sentenced, and the judges may decide to hear the victim's evidence while the alleged attacker sits in a separate room. The accused will be able to see and hear the evidence simultaneously on video.

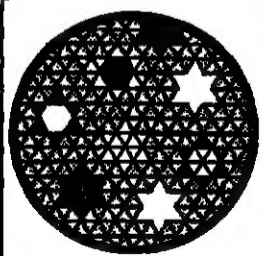
The law was proposed by several MKs from different parties and was discussed by the Knesset Law Committee for a year before coming up for second and third reading yesterday.

New rules for egg cartons

Starting today, egg cartons will have to be marked with the name or symbol of the retailer and the last permitted date of sale. The Health Ministry said that eggs may be sold up to 16 days after they are sorted. The new regulations also require that eggs be transported and stored at temperatures below 20 degrees, and safeguards to prevent the transmission of *salmonella* bacteria. The ministry warns the public not to buy eggs that are unmarked or come from an unknown source.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the king of spades, eight of hearts, king of diamonds, and ace of clubs.



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After UN poverty summit, question remains

IT was an epic session of worthy speeches. World leaders urged an end to poverty before making a lofty pledge to transform the human condition.

Now, after a week of words and red-carpet festivities including a lavish banquet, fireworks and laser displays, a simple question hangs in the air.

Was the UN social summit simply an expensive jamboree? Or will it really bring change to a world where one in five of the inhabitants — more than one billion people — lives below the breadline and where millions have neither jobs nor dignity?

From the streets of Mexico City to the slums of Manila, hopes have been raised that the week-long summit will help bridge the growing divide between rich and poor as the world stumbles towards the 21st century.

Chile's ambassador to the United Nations, who led the way in preparing the UN conference on social development, said the summit had a clear message of hope for the dispossessed.

"It has told the poor that... we will do something about their problems," Juan Somavia told Reuters. "The summit has delivered and put ordinary people back into the picture."

Echoing warnings from many leaders that real change would take time, Somavia said he was hopeful because previous UN conferences on issues ranging from women's rights to the environment had helped bring change over the years.

But some wondered whether the meeting was the latest example of "summit fatigue," a disease that results from increasingly frequent top-level meetings called to discuss the world's ills.

Last year, it was Cairo for the global population explosion, while 1992 saw the UN environment summit in Rio de Janeiro.

In Copenhagen, what underpinned many speeches was the fear that the gap between rich and poor is now so wide that it has become the major threat to security in the post-Cold War era.

NICHOLAS DOUGHTY
COPENHAGEN

"It is important to avoid the arrival of the boat people," UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said in a television interview during the summit.

The summit declaration, which contained general commitments to help developing countries but no binding promises, touched directly on the fear that governments might lose control.

"We can continue to hold the trust of the people of the world only if we make their needs our priority," it said.

But an equitable sharing of the world's resources that would create stable, prosperous countries with little inclination to go to war still seems to be a distant dream.

Behind the rhetoric of unified action lurked the old arguments between the market forces of capitalism and the planned structures of socialism, the bitter tensions between Western nations and the countries they once colonised.

Cuba lashed out at Washington, while Syria, Sudan and others blamed the West for not giving them more trade or writing off the billions of dollars of debt owed by developing countries.

Germany and the United States talked about how countries must learn to help themselves. They underlined the importance of human rights in the presence of several leaders who have been widely criticised in the West for abusing their positions.

Although the end of the Cold War has offered a unique chance for global cooperation, there was also a recognition at the summit that, with the old certainties of East-West division gone, ethnic conflicts and other problems pose new threats.

There seemed to be few common interests. Countries are either keen to hold on to their wealth or increasingly desperate to get a slice of shrinking foreign aid budgets.

The United States and Western Europe are considering cutting foreign aid rather than in-

creasing it, their governments preoccupied with unemployment and the ills of urban society.

The countries of Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics want more help and openly expressed concern that they could be left out if all the cash goes to Africa, Asia and Latin America.

With the United Nations celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, serious questions have already been raised about its ability to secure global peace and justice.

UN peacekeepers, deployed in record numbers around the world, are in trouble in Bosnia and have just abandoned Somalia.

The summit cost more than \$30 million to stage. Depending on your viewpoint, that's either a lot of money or the cost of a single top-of-the-line fighter plane.

"Our task here is not to convince cynics," said Chile's Somavia. "Cynics... will not change the world."

The writer is the chief diplomatic correspondent of Reuters

White House dismisses London's snit over Adams

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — The White House yesterday dismissed British government anxiety at President Clinton's open arms treatment of Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams, saying: "We are aware of their concerns."

White House spokesman Mike McCurry, commenting on the issue, also said that the United States and Britain still enjoyed "a warm and special relationship."

British Prime Minister John Major was furious last week when Clinton gave Adams a US visa to raise funds for Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA, and invited him to a White House reception. Adams can already raise funds for Sinn Féin in Ireland and Britain.

Major took issue with Clinton's policy at the start of a visit to the Middle East.

When asked what was wrong with Clinton seeing Adams when he himself planned to meet yesterday with PLO leader Yasser Arafat, Major called the comparison "mischievous."

"Terrorism has now been denounced by Chairman Arafat. I have not seen it comprehensively denounced by Mr. Adams," Major said.

"Chairman Arafat is now actively opposing terrorism. I'm afraid that Sinn Féin is still directly associated with a fully formed terrorist organisation," he added.

Asked about the adverse British reaction, McCurry said "We

are aware of their concerns. When asked if Clinton had any second thoughts about allowing the Sinn Féin leader to raise funds and attend a White House reception, the White House official said: "No."

Adams commenting on the issue in New York, noted that the Israeli government and the PLO had made a peace treaty.

"The British government have yet to grasp the nettle of making a peace treaty. That's what the talks need to be about. What I have is what Arafat never had, is an electoral mandate which John Major doesn't have in his country and I think it's a bit insensitive of Mr. Major to make those comparisons."

"It's right for him to talk to Yasser Arafat and it's right for him to talk to Sinn Féin. If Major says we'll talk tomorrow, I will catch the first plane back," Adams said.

Adams is on a 10-day visit to the United States during which he will meet President Clinton on Friday, St. Patrick's Day, at the White House.

Major will be coming to Washington next month for an official working visit, US and British officials announced yesterday.

The meeting with Major on April 4 was scheduled before Clinton defied British protests over Adams, US officials said. But British sources said Major has written a letter to Clinton about the Adams issue.

Turkish Alawites clash with police in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (Reuters) — Riot police opened fire on demonstrators yesterday to try to quell two days of riots in Istanbul touched off by an attack on Turkey's minority Moslem Alawite community, witnesses said.

Demonstrators turned in panic and ran up the street, pursued by police who dragged people out of hiding places, yelling and threatening to shoot them.

Anatolian news agency reported eight dead in clashes yesterday after three were killed on Sunday.

The Istanbul governorate imposed a curfew on three areas in Istanbul's Gazi district and Prime Minister Tansu Ciller called an emergency cabinet meeting.

Streets were strewn with wrecked barricades and broken glass from shop windows and the occasional sound of gunfire could still be heard as the curfew began to take effect.

The unrest began on Sunday evening when gunmen in a taxi killed two people and wounded 15 as they strafed four coffee houses frequented by Alawites, members of a Moslem order that opposes an upsurge of religious fundamentalism.

One demonstrator was killed when angry crowds clashed with police until the early hours yesterday. Twenty-six people including 11 policemen were injured.

Riots flared again yesterday morning, with demonstrators throwing stones and sticks at police and gendarmes standing around armored cars.

Many of the rioters were Kurds

from southeast Turkey, where a 10-year war by separatist Kurdish guerrillas has led to allegations of massive abuses by the security forces against civilians.

After a stand-off between the two sides for several hours around midday yesterday, riot police opened fire at the demonstrators, witnesses said.

State television said seven policemen were hurt yesterday. It was not immediately possible to confirm any other casualties.

Turkish leaders appealed for calm. Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said: "We will never permit anyone to achieve dark aims in Turkey. The Alawites, the Sunnis, the Kurds and the Kurds, we have lived together on this land for centuries."

A Reuters correspondent saw some protesters preparing petrol bombs in the streets where demonstrators were chanting "Down with fascism" and "We don't want Sharia (Islamic law)".

Interior Minister Nihat Menzese said 96 shops, eight cars and three police vehicles had been destroyed during the riots.

Menzese said it was not known which group was behind the attack that sparked the riots.

Five Alawite associations issued a statement asking Alawites to avoid provocations but slamming the government for failing to prevent violence.

"These attacks on Alawites and progressive intellectuals are no doubt aimed at Turkey's secular and democratic regime," said Alawite author Luif Kalemli told a news conference.

Burundi fears a coup

BUJUMBURA (Reuters) — Security forces killed two gunmen in northern Burundi yesterday, two days after the killing of a government minister from the majority Hutu tribe.

In Brussels, a representative of Burundi's former ruling party Frodebu accused the Tutsi-dominated military of plotting a coup against President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya while he was abroad.

But a spokesman at Frodebu headquarters in Bujumbura said he knew nothing of the report, as did a Burundi military spokesman. Ntibantunganya was scheduled to arrive in Brussels yesterday.

A diplomat said rumours of an impending coup were frequently rife when the Hutu president was outside the troubled country.

In the latest of a wave of ethnic attacks, officials said gunmen in Bubanza province in the north-west attacked a prison, a military camp, the governor's house and bishop's residence.

Bubanza Governor Herman Tuyaga said two gunmen who came from neighbouring Cibitoke province were killed and a number wounded and called on residents for calm. There were no army casualties.

Bubanza has been paralysed for the last six days since a Tutsi schoolboy accused a Hutu fellow pupil of killing his family in 1993. The Hutu fled to Bujumbura af-

ter being injured in a scuffle.

Security sources said four gunmen attacked a paramilitary police post in Muramvya province east of Bujumbura on Sunday night. One gunman was killed and three shops were ransacked.

In a statement Communications Minister Germain Nkeshimana said four days of mourning would be observed until the burial on Thursday of Energy and Mines Minister Ernest Kabushemeye.

He added Burundians should stick to their daily routine although flags would fly at half mast and radio and television stations would broadcast religious or classical music.

The assassination sparked fears of resumed ethnic conflict in the tiny central African state where the capital has been under a dusk to dawn curfew since ethnic clashes in December.

Witnesses said the city centre opened as normal yesterday with virtually all businesses and government offices operating.

Gunfire and grenade blasts were heard in Bujumbura's slums on Saturday night after Kabushemeye was intercepted in his car by at least three gunmen and gunned down in broad daylight.

Police arrested two suspects. Kabushemeye's bodyguard fired back, killing one of the attackers. The bodyguard, who was wounded in the shootout, died in Bujumbura hospital on Sunday.

Surprise witness to boost claims of racism by Fuhrman

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Detective Mark Fuhrman insists he never met the woman who claims he made racial slurs, but a surprise defense witness is expected to dispute that, according to news reports.

Fuhrman, who takes the witness stand again yesterday in the O.J. Simpson double-murder trial, has testified that he never met Kathleen Bell — the woman who claims he made anti-black slurs to her during a conversation at a Marine recruiting center in the 1980s.

But defense sources said a surprise witness will bolster claims by Kathleen Bell that Fuhrman denounced interracial couples and said he would like to burn all "niggers," Newsweek and KCAL-TV reported.

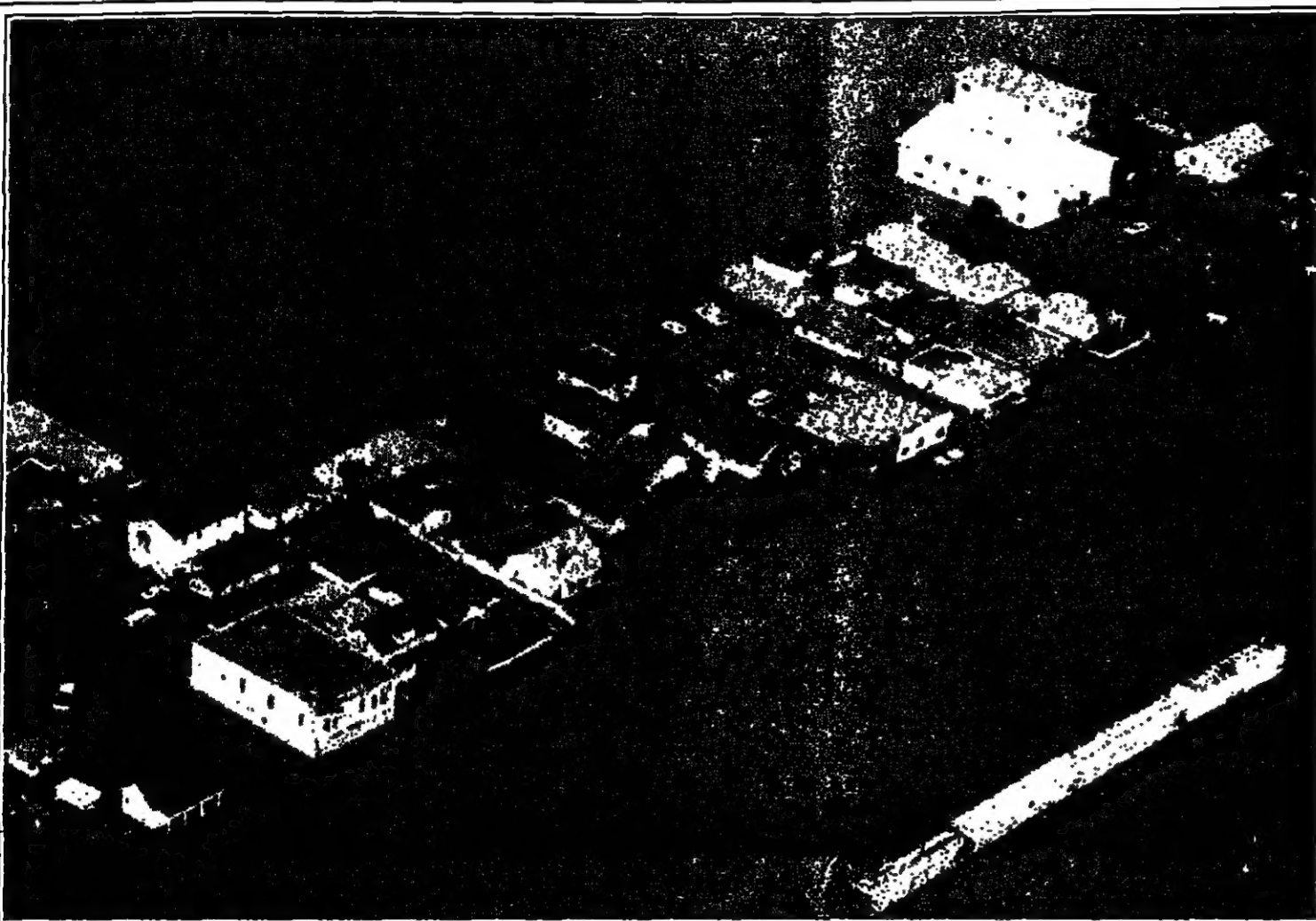
Fuhrman has testified that he found a bloody glove at Simpson's residence the morning after the June 12 murders of Simpson's ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman. Simpson, a legend in American football and a popular television personality, is on trial for the murders.

The defense has suggested that Fuhrman is a racist who planted the glove to frame Simpson, who is black. Fuhrman, who is white, has denied the allegation during testimony for the prosecution.

Cross-examination of Fuhrman was to begin as early as yesterday. Superior Court Judge Lance Ito has given the defense wide latitude to explore the alleged encounter with Bell, who reiterated her allegations against Fuhrman in a Saturday interview with the Long Beach Press-Telegram.

"There are very few people in my life that I've been afraid of and he's one of them," she said.

Defense lawyer F. Lee Bailey disclosed the existence of the surprise witness at a news conference Thursday but did not give any other details.



The city of Pajaro, California, in northern Monterey County, lies under more than three feet of water yesterday after the Pajaro River broke its banks at the weekend and forced the town's residents to flee. (AP)

'Storm of century' cuts off Monterey Peninsula

News agencies
SAN FRANCISCO

FLOODS washed out all roads into California's Monterey Peninsula yesterday as the waterlogged Pacific state struggled to recover from storms that battered two-thirds of the state.

At least 12 people have died in five days of flooding from some of the worst storms in California history.

Crews were trying to rescue one of four cars that drove into a rain-swollen creek when a bridge on the state's main north-south roadway collapsed near the community of Coalinga, in central California.

The car was found buried in mud more than a kilometer from the collapsed bridge. California Highway Patrol Officer Karen Barrows said. Search teams extracted the body of a 10-year-old girl and a woman, and were trying to get to two more bodies in the car, Barrows said.

Yesterday was rain-free for most of California. The National Weather Service said showers were expected again but not the downpours of last week.

President Clinton declared 39 counties disaster areas. This allows residents and busi-

nesses from Humboldt to San Diego counties to apply for federal aid.

In Monterey County, thousands of people left their homes overnight as the Salinas and Pajaro rivers inundated some of the nation's richest farmland.

The flooding cut off the communities around Monterey, about 160 km south of San Francisco.

"At this point all roads are closed — the Monterey Peninsula is literally isolated," said county emergency officer Al Friedrich.

Many people were rousted from their homes as floodwaters rushed into low-lying communities.

"Police went down the streets with their sirens telling people to please leave," Friedrich said. "It's a scary thing to hear in the dark."

From the Oregon state line down to Mexico, rain, wind and snow wreaked havoc.

"It's the most widespread geographic storm in California in this century," said James Bai-

ley of the state-federal Flood Operations Center in Sacramento.

The storms may also be the most expensive in California history, he added, costing up to \$2 billion in a state already burdened with January's Pacific storms, as well as a series of earthquakes, fires and mudslides.

In southern California, residents of Malibu were digging out after mudslides flowed down from the Santa Monica mountains, laid bare by wildfires in 1993, damaging homes and blocking sections of the Pacific Coast Highway Saturday.

In the city of San Jose and the northern California wine country, residents were cleaning up after floods which damaged hundreds of homes and businesses.

William Rukeyser, a spokesman for the California Office of Emergency Services, said 40 of California's 58 counties had declared local states of emergency due to the storms.

The storms hit many areas only just recovering from January floods which caused \$1.3 billion of damage. Damage from the new storms is "easily" in the millions of dollars, Rukeyser said.

Ex-president Carlos Salinas leaves Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, his reputation in shreds, has left Mexico following an increasingly bitter feud with his handpicked successor and his brother's arrest on murder charges.

No public explanation was given for Salinas' departure to the United States. But the weekly news magazine Proceso said Sunday it was a "convenient exile."

Speculation that Salinas would leave Mexico has been rampant since President Ernesto Zedillo authorized the

Feb. 28 arrest of Raul Salinas on charges of masterminding last year's murder of the No. 2 man in the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party.

The rift between Salinas and Zedillo has been growing since Salinas left office after six years on Dec. 1 and shattered the tradition of staying out of Mexican politics.

Salinas angrily and publicly blamed Zedillo earlier this month for the rapid fall of the peso and the country's ensuing woes. He fasted briefly to press his demand that authorities clear his name in connection

with the March 1994 assassination of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio.

Zedillo, who replaced Colosio, responded testily on several occasions. In a nationally televised speech Sunday night, he vowed to clean up Mexico's corrupt political system and insisted austerity measures were necessary.

"Nothing, and no one, will weaken my decision to head up construction of the kind of authentic, legal state that Mexicans deserve," Zedillo said in his speech.

"I will do that presiding over a government of laws, within the structure of a strengthened democracy. We are facing great political, social and economic challenges all at the same time," said Zedillo.

By authorizing the arrest of Salinas' elder brother, Zedillo broke another Mexican tradition that relatives of high-ranking officials are immune from prosecution.

Reforma newspaper of Mexico City said yesterday that Salinas and Zedillo had not spoken since Dec. 24.

The Mexican media had speculated that the Harvard-educated Salinas would move to the US, at least for the next few years.

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ORI DEVIR
OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN ISRAEL
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Winners of the Chaine des Rotisseurs world famous restaurant award

Leeson opposes extradition to Singapore

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Nick Leeson, the trader blamed for the Barings Bank collapse, formally refused yesterday to be extradited to Singapore and his lawyer said he believed Leeson would eventually be returned to Britain.

Leeson told a judge during a 20-minute meeting in a holding cell at a Frankfurt courthouse of his decision, which German authorities had expected, prosecutor Hans-Hermann Eckert said.

Leeson did not comment on the current Singapore charges against him, other than to tell the judge that "he wanted to assert his defense later," Eckert told a news conference.

"He told the judge he wants to be extradited to England and does not want to be returned to Singapore," Eckert said, adding Leeson would not be released on bail.

Leeson's refusal to agree to voluntary extradition to the Far East city-state was the first chance the 28-year-old Briton has had to fight the bid by Singapore to have him returned.

Leeson's lawyers said last week he would refuse the request and thus limit Singapore to trying him only on charges contained in its final extradition papers.

Singapore officials will add more charges to their initial extradition request, which sought to have Leeson held on allegations he forged documents at the bank, Eckert said.

The formal extradition request must be handed to Bonn by May 2. But Eckert said the deadline can be extended by one month and predicted the entire process will last four to five months.

Eberhard Kempf, the German lawyer representing Leeson, told reporters after the jail meeting that he believed Leeson would eventually be returned to Britain, headquarters of Barings.

He said London officials probing the collapse of the 233-year-old bank were likely to issue an extradition request.

British officials have yet to say whether they will seek to have Leeson handed over, but have noted that to do so they must find evidence that Leeson broke the law in Britain.

Eckert said German authorities have not had contact in the last few days with British officials to discuss possible extradition requests.

If Britain does seek Leeson, a Hesse state high court in Frankfurt will rule only on the legal merits of both extradition requests.

If both requests were approved by the court, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government would have to make what Kempf called a "political decision" on where Leeson would go.

In such a circumstance, Kempf said, "I am sure that he would be sent to Britain." He also noted that he could find no instance of someone being extradited to Singapore from Germany.

Leeson is blamed for running up losses reportedly as high as \$1.6 billion (\$1.45 billion) on Japanese stock futures that allegedly led to the bank's collapse.

Kempf said Leeson was "quite at ease" at the morning meeting, which was led by Judge Horst Wolfheimer, the local judge representing the Hesse high court.

Leeson was taken in a prison van to the courthouse yesterday from the prison in suburban Hoechst, where he has been detained since arriving in Germany on March 2 on a flight from the Far East with his wife.

Canada rejects demands to free Spanish trawler

OTTAWA (Reuters) - Canada, on a crusade to save the Greenland halibut from extinction, stood firm yesterday in its fish war against Western Europe and rejected demands that it free a Spanish ship and captain it seized last week.

Meanwhile, an angry Spanish government banned all official visits between the two countries and demanded that Canada be brought to the World Court and punished with trade sanctions.

Spanish ministers, accusing Canada of aggression for seizing a Spanish trawler in international waters, said they wanted the European Union to punish Ottawa.

But Canada's Justice Minister Allan Rock said Canada would proceed with its legal case against the Spanish captain.

"What we have here is a country acting on the doctrine of protection, which is part of international law, to protect something that is threatened by extinction," Rock told the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

"We are acting on the doctrine of emergency, which is recognized in international law, and the principle that the law evolves to take into account changes in circumstances," he said of Canada's attempt to prevent overfishing off its east coast.

Canadian officials said no formal talks are planned as both sides dug in their heels over the fate of the vessel seized off the coast of Newfoundland while fishing for Greenland halibut. Canada maintains the fish is in danger of extinction and this could impose severe economic penalties on the province of Newfoundland.

Diplomats from the 15 EU countries meeting in Brussels yesterday for an emergency session rejected formal talks with Canada until the seized vessel, the Estai, is released.

Diplomatic contacts are taking place, Canadian officials said, but no formal negotiations to end the increasingly bitter dispute.

"There are no negotiations going on," said Canadian Foreign Affairs spokesman Eduardo del Buoy.

Canadian gunboats chased down the Spanish trawler, fired across its bow and boarded the ship on the high seas on Thursday. The arrest took place just outside of Canada's 325-km territorial limit, prompting the European Union to call the seizure an act of piracy.

A hostile crowd jeered the captain of the Estai and pelted a delegation of European ambassadors with garbage and eggs shortly after Canadian authorities docked the boat in St. John's harbor on Sunday afternoon.

In Brussels, Spain's ambassador to the EU said Canada will have to free the Estai unconditionally before talks can start.

EU sources said Canada had proposed an increased EU fishing quota in the disputed area around the Grand Banks in the North Atlantic in return for neutral country checks on EU vessels fishing there. But Canadian officials denied that.

Canada says it is trying to conserve the fish by limiting catches in the region, and wants a negotiated settlement.

S. African unitary rand in confident debut

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - South Africa's new unitary rand made a confident debut on its first day of trading yesterday following the scrapping of the second tier financial rand exchange control mechanism, dealers said.

"The whole thing went off fantastically," a senior foreign exchange dealer said.

The rand rose against the weakening dollar and sterling as well as against the German mark.

South Africa's 10-month-old post-apartheid government announced on Friday it was scrapping the financial rand from yesterday.

Finance Minister Chris Liebenberg said he was pleased with the reaction of foreign exchange markets to the abolition of the financial rand, but cautioned it was too soon to draw conclusions.

"I'm pleased. It's exactly what we expected," he told reporters in Cape Town.

But he added: "You can't judge it on one day. I would say give it about a week...not that I expect it to be much different."

The rand ended at 3.6155/85 to the dollar late yesterday from 3.6400/50 at the close on Friday, shortly before Liebenberg announced the long-awaited abolition. It edged up against the mark with the German currency quoted at 0.3880/86 to the rand, from 0.3874/82 on Friday.

Traders reported central bank buying of dollars, which limited the rand's gain.

This was in line with earlier statements by Reserve (central) Bank governor Chris Stals who said soon after trade began the bank had been buying small amounts of dollars.

He told Reuters he was "very satisfied" with the early trading levels of the new unified rand.

Stals said it was fortunate the exchange rate reform occurred when sterling was under pressure and when the dollar was relatively weak.

"In this situation, with the turmoil in international currency markets the adjustment is going very smoothly for us," he said.



Players chase a ball during an exhibition elephant polo match in New Delhi yesterday. Each team comprises four elephants with two riders on each. The match was the first ever in the Indian capital. (Reuters)

Croatian Serbs rule out tougher UN mandate

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - A deal heading off the ejection of 12,000 UN peacekeepers from Croatia came into question when rebel Serbs rejected Zagreb's conditions for letting them stay.

In Bosnia, UN special envoy Yasushi Akashi met leaders of the separatist Serbs in a bid to cap a spiral of violence endangering Bosnia's 10-week-old ceasefire.

A drift toward renewed war in adjacent Croatia was halted at the weekend when Zagreb agreed under Big Power pressure to rescind a decision to expel 12,000 UN peacekeepers guarding a truce line with rebel minority Krajina Serbs.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman struck a deal with the United States under which UN troops could stay pending talks on cutting their numbers and changing their role to include securing borders now controlled by Serbs.

A Krajina Serb official rejected international supervision of the borders with Serbia, sought by Zagreb to cut off the flow of arms to Krajina Serbs and pressure them into reintegration with Croatia.

"We agree to keep UN troops but we will not change their mandate because no one has the right to push us towards Croatia," said

Slobodan Jarevic, special Krajina envoy in Belgrade, capital of the rebels' patron Yugoslavia.

"We can't accept monitoring, because UN forces would be implementing Croatian law and orders from the Croatian government, while the RSK (the Krajina Serb 'republic') has been independent for four years," Jarevic told Reuters.

"We will send a letter to the (UN) Secretary-General tomorrow probably. We will request UN troops must stay but they cannot change their mandate."

Akashi, describing his mood as tenacious but not optimistic, met Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and military commander General Ratko Mladic in the Serb base of Pale southeast of besieged Sarajevo.

The talks ended at dusk and Akashi and the Serbs declined comment. UN officials said Akashi would spend the night in Pale and fly back to UN headquarters in Croatia today.

Bosnia's deteriorating security situation was highlighted by gunfire at Akashi's jet arriving in Sarajevo on Sunday and an unusual Red Cross rebuke of combatants for shootings at aircraft carrying humanitarian supplies.

Akashi's plane was hit by an anti-aircraft round fired, according to UN officials, from

Bosnian Serb positions. No one was injured. The Bosnian Serbs denied responsibility.

Three people were killed and eight wounded in Sarajevo by intermittent artillery and sniper fire on Sunday, the first day of Akashi's mission to stop the rot in the ceasefire. It runs out on May 1 but both sides have threatened not to renew it.

Sarajevo was generally calm yesterday aside from an afternoon bout of sniping near the exposed Holiday Inn.

Serb forces have also stepped up their harassment of UN operations, blocking aid convoys, hijacking UN military supplies and preventing all medicines from reaching three isolated Moslem enclaves in eastern Bosnia.

In Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) called on the warring sides to respect the Red Cross emblem.

"Several aircraft carrying humanitarian relief supplies have been deliberately targeted and hit by gunfire in Sarajevo during the last few days," the ICRC, which laid no direct blame for the attacks, said in a statement.

Indonesian President Suharto flew into Sarajevo yesterday without incident for talks with the Bosnian government in the latest gesture of solidarity with Bosnia's Moslems by the Islamic world.

First US astronaut to be space launched with Russians

BAIKONUR (AP) - Four shuttle launches haven't dulled the rush of lift-off for NASA astronaut Norman Thagard, who is to become the first American to ride into space aboard a Russian rocket.

The launch "will be a real thrill for me," Thagard told reporters yesterday on the eve of the mission, seated next to his Russian crewmates behind a glass wall to protect them from germs.

Thagard, a four-time space shuttle flier, will join an illustrious group of space travelers who have departed Earth from this launch pad at the once-secret Baikonur Cosmodrome in the steppes of Central Asia.

Yuri Gagarin, first man in space. Valentina Tereshkova, first woman in space. Alexei Leonov, first spacewalker. Laika, first dog in space. They all left from here.

Thagard, Vladimir Dezhurov and Gennady Strekalov, and their backup crew, appeared before a Russian space commission yesterday, assuring officials they're ready for their three-month mission aboard space station Mir.

Launch was tentatively scheduled for 0613 GMT today.

"I think the thing that has impressed me most is that the joint nature of this, the cooperative nature of this, has proceeded flawlessly," Thagard told reporters.

"There really have been no serious problems, and I hope and I believe that if nothing else we have demonstrated that we can work together in a very complex area, accomplish much and be very successful."

Thagard said he plans to take some American food with him into orbit; he didn't say what. He said he'll miss his family and friends.

"I have a little Russian cat, and I'll miss him, too," he said.

More than 300 rockets have soared from what the Russians reverently call Gagarin's launch pad. One of the first launches there was that of Sputnik in 1957, the world's first artificial satellite.

The latest rocket trip from the hangar to Gagarin's pad began at dawn. A diesel train pushed Thagard's rocket, laying horizontally on a green flatbed railroad car, down 1.6 km of track.

Once at the pad, the railroad car turned into a hydraulic lift and gently propped the gray and white rocket upright.

Gore raises Baltic states' hopes of joining NATO

TALLINN (AP) - US Vice President Al Gore yesterday raised the three Baltic states' hopes for NATO membership, but cautioned that Russian interests must be taken into account.

Speaking to a crowd of 7,000 people, Gore renewed the pledge of unwavering US support for the region.

"No outside power should ever again cast a veto on your future," he told the enthusiastic audience, which braved sub-freezing temperatures to hear his speech in Tallinn's main square.

Gore added: "You must not be consigned to a gray zone of fear and uncertainty."

The Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - have been concerned about a possible resurgence of Russian aggression.

They bristle at any suggestions the United States and other Western countries may be willing to cede them back into Moscow's "sphere of influence."

While thankful for Washington's long-standing support for Baltic independence, leaders have expressed nervousness at a recent US tendency to focus on Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in talking about potential NATO members.

Gore's trip was meant to assuage concerns among the former Soviet republics that they may have been taken out of the running for inclusion in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Castro elated by visit to France

PARIS (AP) - Greeted with fanfare at the presidential palace, Fidel Castro declared yesterday that his visit to France marked the end of "apartheid" imposed by the West on Cuba for 36 years.

"This morning, touching French soil, I said to myself, 'This is it. Apartheid is over,'" Castro told President Francois Mitterrand during lunch at the Elysee Palace.

Later, in a passionate speech at UNESCO, Castro accused the United States of trying to dominate the world and denounced its embargo of Cuba as a "criminal blockade" that victimizes children, women and the elderly.

Outside the UNESCO building, about 40 or 50 protesters assailed Cuba's human rights record and demanded the release of political prisoners.

"It hurts me that Castro is received by UNESCO when he's got numerous artists in jail," said a protester, Jordana Lazaro.

Castro, one of the world's last communist leaders, received a trumpet-and-drum fanfare as he arrived at the Elysee Palace and reviewed colorfully uniformed Republican Guardsmen. It was the first time he had been a guest of one of the major Western powers.

Mitterrand clasped his hands for several moments as photographers and TV crews recorded the encounter between two of the world's longest-serving heads of state.

Castro, 68, took power in 1959. Mitterrand, 78, and ailing with cancer, ends his 14-year presidency in May.

Officially, Castro's three-day visit comes at the invitation of UNESCO, and is not classified as a state visit. But his itinerary includes meetings with many of the most powerful people in France.

Castro wore his olive-green military uniform when he arrived from the UN poverty summit in Copenhagen and breakfasted with France's first lady, Danielle Mitterrand. But he changed into a dark blue suit for his two-hour visit at the Elysee Palace, including talks with Mitterrand and a luncheon.

At UNESCO, he was greeted by throngs of well-wishers waving Cuban flags and chanting "Fidel, Fidel." Many wore lapel pins with a picture of his revolutionary comrade-in-arms, Che Guevara.

Castro repeatedly assailed the United States, denouncing "the complete hegemony of this one country... which scorns sovereignty, scorns peaceful settlement of disputes."

The United States "wants to control the outcome of the world," he said.

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My representative will be at the entrance to the Shu'afat ridge on March 23, 1995, from 9:00-9:30 a.m., to give explanations and hear objections to the execution of this work.

Dr. Shlomo Brovender
Director, Electricity Authority

THE JERUSALEM POST

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Economic aid and democracy

ONE of the requests the government has made of visiting Prime Minister John Major is that Britain help achieve a primary goal of the current peace process: the economic independence of the self-rule areas. To this end, the "contributing countries," particularly the seven industrial powers and the oil-rich Arab regimes, are expected to lead, grant, and invest substantial sums.

To his credit, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres foresaw this need long ago. Presuming that without economic benefits the process would founder, and clinging to a decade-old vision of a Middle Eastern "Marshall Plan," he has been soliciting economic aid for the Palestinians ever since the Oslo agreement was signed.

Now the need for such funds has become even more acute. The government's initial expectations that terrorism would subside once the political process began have proved baseless, while the closure on the territories has apparently been effective in virtually stopping terrorist activities. Nonetheless, the government is faced with a painful dilemma. It cannot risk lifting the closure completely, for it may mean the resumption of terrorist killings on a large scale. But to leave it in place will inevitably result in the economic crippling of the Gaza District and untold hardships for the inhabitants of Judea and Samaria.

Only an immediate, massive injection of funds can give the Palestinians a ray of hope and renewed faith in the process, if not substantial relief. But it is foolhardy to expect the

contributing countries to make such an injection under current circumstances.

The facts are all too plain. Since the signing of the Oslo agreement, the Gross National Product in Gaza has diminished by close to 50 percent. Unemployment is at the 40-50 percent level. Corruption is rampant and disorganization ubiquitous.

This does not bode well. Having enjoyed an unprecedented boom under Israeli rule, and relied on jobs in Israel for at least a third of their income, the inhabitants of the territories will find it difficult to accept a drastically lowered standard of living and chronic mass unemployment. Yet an "economic miracle" that would bring a modicum of economic well-being to the territories cannot take place without a secured freedom of movement and goods across borders - now rendered impossible by terrorism.

If what Peres confidants are saying is accurate, he has lowered his expectations. He is thinking more in terms of industrial parks in the territories than a grandiose regional Marshall Plan. But perhaps most telling is a report that he has told the director-general of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe that the Middle East regimes must become democratic before lasting solutions can be found. Indeed, the most valuable lesson of the post-World War II Marshall Plan is that only cooperation between democracies can bring secure regional peace and lasting economic prosperity. It might have been useful to realize that before the current process began.

Militant Hindus

ELECTIONS in the vast nation of India are often something of a mystery even to well-informed foreigners, so diverse is the country and so complex the issues. This is particularly true of local legislative elections, such as are being held this week. Yet it is important to determine trends in what is usually called the world's biggest democracy.

Despite endemic corruption, violence, and racial and religious tensions, democracy in India continues to work and the value of the Indian system may never be truly appreciated unless it should collapse. A state of emergency declared by the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the 1970s, which suspended many constitutional freedoms, is still regarded by Indians as the darkest hour of their post-colonial history.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's ruling Congress party received a thrashing in state polls last year and from the first results yesterday, it appears the wave of discontent with the party is still riding high only a year before crucial general elections. Equally interesting are the signs of rising Hindu nationalism in India, mirroring a post-communist world that is already seeing advancing Islamic extremism and the growth of the Christian right in the United States. Granted, neither the Hindu or Christian developments have come anywhere near the rabid fanaticism of the Islamists of Algeria or Pakistan, but trends of extreme nationalism based on religion are a worrisome phenomenon at the end of the 20th century.

The Hindu nationalists, represented by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), swept the previously solid Congress from power in Gujarat

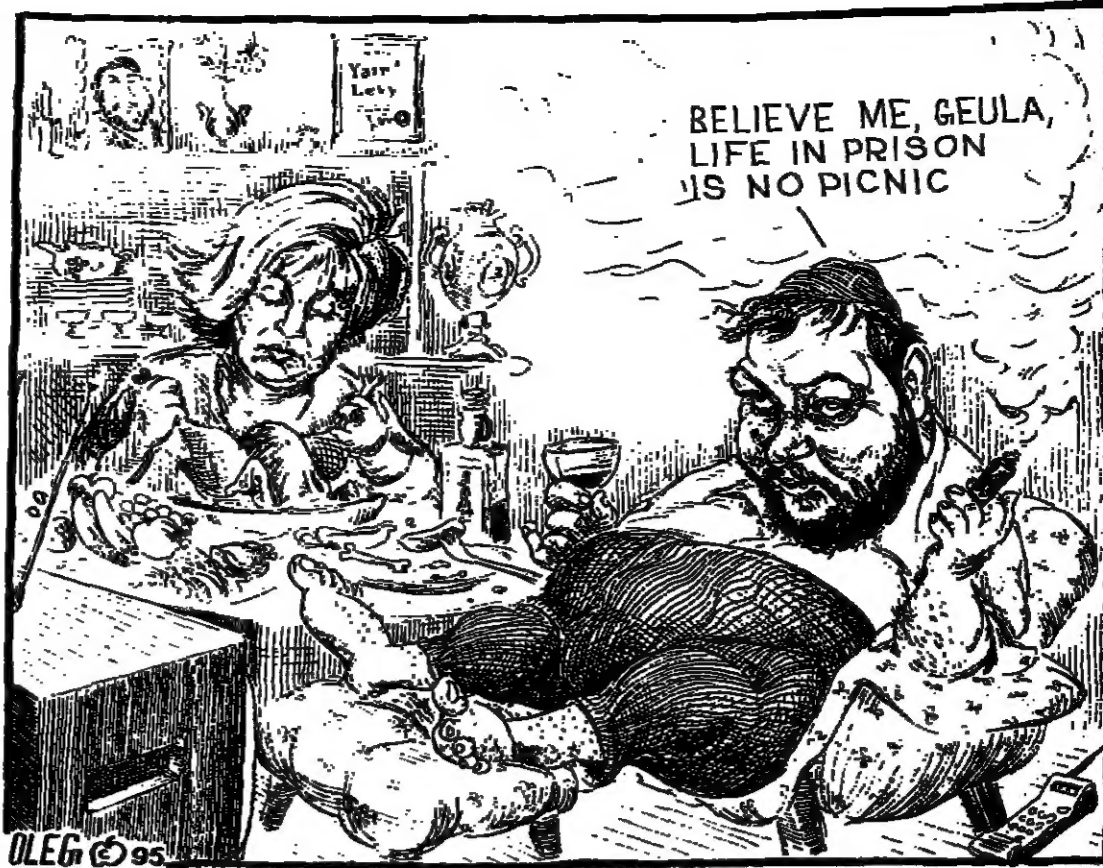
state in the west. It was here in 1992 that the BJP backed the Hindu extremists who destroyed the historic mosque of Ayodhya, leading to Moslem-Hindu riots across the country. In the country's richest state, Maharashtra - which includes Bombay - an alliance of BJP and the Hindu Shiv Sena captured a traditional Congress stronghold. Shiv Sena was held responsible for fomenting religious strife in Bombay, where 800 people died, after Ayodhya.

Congress won the less significant northeastern Manipur and eastern Orissa. Violence has delayed the vote in the northern state, Bihar, and counting starts later this week in the remote northeastern Arunachal Pradesh.

The Hindu parties making the running in the most important states have been demanding an end to the secular status of India and the declaration of Hinduism as the state religion. They also imply that would mean an end to the special status the constitution provides for the country's substantial minorities. While there is little imminent sign of this agenda being adopted, it should cause concern to India's squabbling secular politicians.

The last thing the world needs is a vast new theocracy. There is no way such a proposal could be adopted without turning the subcontinent into another killing field of hatred and bloodshed. The answer to Islamic fundamentalism is not parallel fundamentalism from other major religions. As has been proved in Moslem Turkey and many Catholic countries, the only path for a modern state is the secular one, which then guarantees true freedom of belief and worship to all its citizens.

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There are no short cuts

THE editor of the Damascus daily *Al-Ba'ath*, Turki Sakar, thinks Yitzhak Rabin has good reasons for optimism about the chances of peace with Syria.

I don't agree. A full, comprehensive peace with the Syrians can last only if certain conditions are met.

The first of these is the solution of all current problems between Israel and its principal neighbors. Primarily, this would include:

- a regional agreement on water distribution, and a change of policy by Hizbullah, which doesn't only seek to "liberate" South Lebanon, but to destroy Israel as well;
- a full resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue, including the 300,000 Palestinians in Syria; and
- the achievement of a genuine and stable peace with Iraq and Iran (two countries which openly preach the destruction of Israel and take no pains to conceal their military preparations to this end).

The second condition is an end

SHLOMO GAZIT

to Syrian support for terror, which operates with total impunity not far from *Al-Ba'ath*'s editorial offices.

THE THIRD condition is continuity. Can we rely on a stable

It takes much more than a piece of paper to make a peace

regime to continue in Syria after Assad leaves the political stage?

Even the editor of *Al-Ba'ath* is aware of the danger posed by the spread and domination of fanatical Moslem extremism.

What might happen in Syria in such an event would only be a change of regime; but for Israel, it would represent a new and menacing reality.

We would be confronting a neighboring regime whose policy totally negates our existence. In such circumstances, a peace treaty would become a useless piece of paper.

Until we are clear and satisfied on all these points, I, as an Israeli, can have no faith in any peace concluded with Syria, however sincere the intentions behind it.

Any peace treaty must be bolstered by security components that are as credible as possible, and that includes territorial ones. It is a matter of regret that Syria seems to be exhibiting no understanding whatsoever of Israel's problems - hence my reason for pessimism.

Syria must understand one thing: Israel doesn't intend to make it any easier for its enemies to destroy it in the future.

The writer, a former IDF chief of intelligence, is a senior research fellow at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies.

Same old mistakes again

IN May and June 1967, Egypt's president Nasser began a process of confrontation with Israel that ended in war and tragedy for his country.

In the face of economic failure and domestic opposition, he looked for a foreign policy victory to strengthen his regime. After closing the Straits of Tiran, Nasser ordered the removal of the UN buffer force. These moves drew massive support in the Arab world, and he continued by mobilizing troops along the Israeli border, and creating a joint military command with Syria and Jordan.

Encouraged by the mass (government-organized) demonstrations which cheered his threats, and swept away by his own rhetoric, Nasser pledged to renew the war of destruction against Israel. However, instead of the easy victory he had expected, this confrontation led to Israel's preemptive attack and the destruction of the Arab armies.

In the last few months, Egypt has pursued policies and acted in ways that are similar to the pattern of misjudgment, miscalculation and exaggeration that took place in 1967.

The Mubarak government has launched a concerted campaign to demand that Israel alter its nuclear policy, despite the repeated and clear Israeli rejection of any such changes under existing circumstances.

Ignoring the broad acceptance of Israeli policy around the world, Egypt is also seeking to gain enough support among Arab and nonaligned states to block the extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty scheduled to be considered in April.

In addition, the Egyptians have emerged as a major obstacle to progress in the peace process. Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa publicly supports Syrian intransigence and Hafez Assad's demands for full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights,

GERALD STEINBERG

without the full peace demanded by Israel.

In their summit meeting in Alexandria, the leaders of Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia developed a program of action to prevent or slow the pace of normalization and cooperation between Israel and other Arab states. In

Mubarak continues to up the ante, like Nasser in 1967

addition, Egyptian has extended trade and cooperation with Libya, in defiance of the UN embargo linked to Libyan support for terrorism.

THESE ACTIONS have created an atmosphere of confrontation and crisis in which Cairo has lost control, as happened in 1967. Egyptian actions and demands have led to angry Israeli and American reactions, triggering further escalation by Egypt.

By leading the opposition to the extension of the NPT and defying the UN embargo of Libya, the Egyptians have endangered the continued flow of \$2 billion in annual American military assistance. A cut-off to this aid will primarily hurt the Egyptians and the Mubarak regime, which is dependent on the support of the military and desperately needs the continued US aid.

Similarly, the collapse of the peace process will also damage Egyptian interests significantly by increasing the power of the radicals and fundamentalists.

Nevertheless, the Mubarak government continues to up the ante, escalating the rhetoric and threats, and leaving no room for maneuver.

In listening to Egyptian leaders and spokesmen, including President Mubarak, Moussa, and ad-

viser Osama El-Baz, one gets the impression that they believe their own propaganda. Like Nasser and his advisers in 1967, they have lost track of reality and the impact of these policies.

Threatened by corruption, Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, Mubarak and his supporters see confrontation with Israel and the US as ready vehicles for regaining domestic political support and as a means of reversing the steady decline of power and respect they enjoy in the Arab world.

However, confrontations with Israel and the US won't solve the Egyptian government's problems; they will only add to them. Had Mubarak and his advisers thought their policies through, they would have realized that their NPT campaign lacks support, and that they will inevitably be forced to back down, or become an international pariah state, like North Korea. The longer the campaign continues, the costlier it will be.

This being the case, Israel must remain firm, while attempting to bring Egypt's leaders back to Middle-Eastern realities. Now, as at the beginning of the 1967 crisis, Israeli weakness and concessions will only lead to more pressure and further demands. Conversely, Israeli firmness and American pressure may force the Mubarak government to examine the implications of its actions before more damage is done.

The Egyptians need to be reminded of the events of 1967, and of the dangers of misperception and misjudgment. A propaganda war directed at Israel may seem like an good diversion from Egypt's real problems. But it will end up hurting Egypt more than anyone else.

The writer directs research on arms control and Israeli security at Bar-Ilan University's BESA Center for Strategic Studies.

POSTSCRIPTS

SOME FRIENDS in Jerusalem's Baka neighborhood used to throw Purim parties considered by their circle to be the social event of the year. They lived, appropriately, at the corner of two streets named for the hero and heroine in the Book of Es-

ther, and their place was nicknamed "Purim Square."

At the end of one edition of the Shushan Purim bash, a reveler telephoned for a taxi ride home. A dispatcher answered and dutifully asked where the woman

would be waiting for the cab. "At the corner of Mordechai Hayehudi and Esther Hamalka," she replied. We suspect taxi companies must get a lot of crank calls like that on Purim: the dispatcher hung up.

Well
meant
isn't
enough

EFFRAIM ZUROFF

THE high point of President Brazauskas's recent visit here was his dramatic speech at the Knesset, in which he asked forgiveness for Lithuanian participation in the murder of Jews during the Holocaust.

It was a welcome admission of guilt. On the surface, it was a positive signal in a problematic relationship.

But will concrete steps follow? That remains to be seen.

Lithuanian leaders have addressed the issue in the four years since independence, but not one has been able to express conviction unequivocally, while ac-

knowing the massive scope of Lithuanian collaboration with the Nazis.

Such talk is "politically incorrect" in Vilnius, where most politicians and officials prefer to speak about the "symmetry" in historical relations with Lithuanian Jewry.

According to their version of events, as many, or even more, Lithuanians rescued Jews as murdered them. Moreover, they see the fact that Jews were among those who supported the Communists as justifying Lithuanian participation in the cold-blooded murder of their Jewish neighbors.

Spared a confrontation with their past by 46 years of Soviet occupation, it has been difficult for Lithuanians to respond to the historical facts: 220,000 Lithuanian Jews murdered, in most cases by Lithuanians; the highest victimology rate (94 percent) in occupied Europe; and massive collaboration by all strata of Lithuanian society.

The revelations in 1991 by the Simon Wiesenthal Center that convicted Nazi war criminals had been rehabilitated, and the obvious reluctance of the Lithuanian government to prosecute those who murdered Jews did nothing to improve the Lithuanian-Jewish relationship.

I RECENTLY returned from Vilnius, where, as a member of a joint Lithuanian-Israeli commission of inquiry, I helped investigate the files of Lithuanians who had been granted rehabilitation.

There were dozens of Nazi murderers among them. With one exception, there was no explanation of why they had been exonerated.

In the meantime - pronouncements of honorable intentions aside - independent Lithuania has neither prosecuted nor extradited a single Nazi war criminal - not even Alexandras Lileikis, commander of the Lithuanian Security Police in the Vilnius district, who played an active role in the annihilation of tens of thousands of Jews in the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," and is currently being prosecuted in the US.

Under these circumstances, the key is largely in Israel's hands. Only if pressure is applied from Jerusalem is there any hope that the Lithuanians will actually prosecute Nazi war criminals and cancel the rehabilitations granted to murderers of Jews. Only if Israel insists that Vilnius honor the obligations stemming from past crimes is there any chance of achieving even minimal justice.

President Brazauskas is probably the best person to take the necessary steps. But even he is unlikely to act without continuous pressure from Israel.

It would be easier for Israel to develop ties with Lithuania without regard for crimes committed during the Holocaust. But that would be an abdication of historical responsibility.

The writer is director of the Israel office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE ARMENIAN MASSACRES

Sir, - Yitzhak Kerem's article ("The Armenian catastrophe," February 22) misrepresents the Education Ministry's policy on the inclusion of the Armenian tragedy in the high-school curriculum.

Without joining here into academic history debates or distinctions between genocide and massacre, I would like to clarify the following:

1. Recently, a textbook by Dr. Yair Oron on this historical subject was not approved as an authorized school book for academic, pedagogic and technical reasons.

2. However, several months ago, Professor Amnon Rubinstein, Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, decided in principle that the subject of the Armenian massacres should be taught in Israeli schools with next year's curriculum.

YEOSHUA AMISHAV,
Spokesman, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport
Jerusalem.

ECOLOGY

Sir, - Kol hakavod to Leonard M. Short and to you for publishing "Ecological (non)sense" (March 5). He has proven incontrovertibly that adherents to Green Mysticism are blind cultists. Like all other biased members of such organizations, for them to be logical would be illogical.

SOLO RECHTMAN

Tzora.

COLOSSAL NERVE

Sir, - I feel infuriated by letter writer John Whitbeck (February 20) who urges Israel to push speedily ahead with the peace process, paying, it is implied, no heed to numerous Arab violations of the accord and learning no lessons from the disastrous consequences of the steps taken up to now. For the information of Mr. Whitbeck and other like-minded people, it should be pointed out that if the peace process is indeed being held up through a reluctance on the part of the government to make more far-reaching concessions without convincing evidence (which should also convince the nation) that the other side truly wants peace, so much the better! Such caution does not, as the letter writer would have it, point to Israel having chosen "renewed confrontation" over peace, but signifies an awareness that it could be dangerous for Israel to make strategic sacrifices whilst the goodwill of the opposing side is still very much in question. The danger exists that a weakened Israel with borders made less defensible through territorial concessions could be a tempting target for an opposing side which has not convinced us that it has given up its dreams of vanquishing Israel.

For Mr. Whitbeck, writing from the safety of Paris, to bicker Israel into taking steps which could undermine its security and even jeopardize the survival of the country, is a colossal nerve.

RHONA YEMINI
Givatayim.

BRAINWASHING

Sir, - Hanna Eisenmann's letter (February 21) is hardly a recipe for saving Jewish lives. What would it take for Ms. Eisenmann to realize that the tragedy of so many deaths can be directly traced to policies based on her classification of "Talab and Samir" as "murderous nomads"? Her exhortation to "fight for justice, peace, security" in our land up to its promised borders is a bloodthirsty gun-slinger. Whose children is she prepared to see die in the inevitable battle she calls for, to stop the "blasphemy of giving away our land"?

Were Ms. Eisenmann not one of the gentler sex, we would certainly receive my nomination for Aytollah.

RUSSELL HARRIS

Tel Aviv.

IMMIGRANTS FROM THE CIS

Sir, - I wish to thank Absorption Minister Yair Tishbi for trying to teach Israelis that we immigrants from Russia and the CIS do not have a monopoly on crime and other harmful anti-social activities (your report of February 14). To cut our crime rate even further, we must be given employment and decent housing.

BORIS KALPUMYUT
Jerusalem.

مكتبة الناصر

14, 1995 The Jerusalem Post

Well meant isn't enough

EFFRAIM ZUROFF

its president's fine words aside, Lithuania hasn't acted against a single Nazi war criminal

n

Miriam and Max's boys make good

WHEN Harvey and Bob Weinstein were growing up in Queens, they decried Saturday movies like popcorn.

Last month, their Miramax Films - named for their mom, Miriam, and dad, Max - collected 22 Oscar nominations for seven films.

It's a far cry from Flushing, Queens. But the Weinsteins have steadfastly held onto their roots en route to their latest, Oscar-nominated films: *Pulp Fiction*, *Bullets Over Broadway*, *Tom and Viv*, *Red, Queen Margot*, *Heavenly Creatures* and *Strawberry and Chocolate*.

"As the American audience's appetite for films with original and compelling stories increases, it's wonderful that the Academy is equally enthusiastic," the Weinsteins said in a statement.

To get to the top, the brothers have cashed in on guts, instinct and a genuine love of movies, relying on a scrappy, loud, blunt-speaking New York-style exuberance that - at least outwardly -

seems to fly in the face of tanned-and-toned Hollywood.

In 1993, *Fortune* magazine added the Weinsteins to its list of toughest bosses, citing, among other things, phone-throwing tantrums.

"They say I'm a monster, you know," a laughing Harvey Weinstein once said. He once promised in a letter to *The Los Angeles Times* to take "a series of Management 101 courses at a local

community college."

"If Harvey and I were managing a team," said his baseball-aficionado brother, "we'd probably fire guys in the middle of an inning."

Bob, 39, has been known to play a mean game of one-on-one basketball. Harvey, 42 - nicknamed "Harvey Scissorhands" for his propensity for shortening movies - once held a packed subway car rapt with his knowledge

of movie trivia.

The Weinsteins entered show business as music promoters - from Grateful Dead concerts in Buffalo to the national tour of a musical "Beatlemania" recreating Beatles hits.

Fourteen years ago, they formed Miramax, an independent movie company with headquarters at actor Robert De Niro's converted warehouse in lower Manhattan's trendy Tri-

BeCa district.

Miramax's forte is turning obscure films into box office successes. It has had limited success producing its own movies, instead buying distribution rights to finished films produced by others.

Through such films as *sex, lies and videotape*, *The Crying Game*, *My Left Foot* and *Enchanted April*, Miramax emerged as a top purveyor of movies made outside

the Hollywood system. It distributed Oscar-winner *The Piano* and the critically acclaimed *Like Water for Chocolate*.

"Like diligent archeologists," wrote *Daily Variety*, "the Weinsteins each year manage to come home from their foreign wanderings with a treasure trove of cinematic artifacts, not to mention a coterie of new filmmakers."

In 1993, Disney's Buena Vista Pictures Division bought the formerly cash-strapped Miramax for a reported \$60 million. The Weinsteins remain at the helm. (AP)

Laugh your head off

THEATER REVIEW

NAOMI DOUDAI

HENRY VIII:

Diary of a Serial Killer
Devised and directed by John Abulafia. Natural Theatre Company, UK, with Sylvia Griffin, Ben Livingstone, Iain Woberspoon, Wendy Parkin and Ralph Owick.

DOTTY, batty, beautifully bawdy and insanely irreverent, this is a spitting spoof on the love lives of two sons of the British royal family, Henry VIII and his dejected, rejected descendant, present-day Prince Charles.

Less of a dazzler than *Scarlatti's Wedding*, this is still irresistible with its swinging Anne Boleyn, Gospel-whooping Jane Seymour, Sister Agnes, a Glaswegian in drag, and a hugely hilarious Henry.

Nor does the latter let the audience off the hook. This reviewer was hauled up onto the stage as a prospective consort to His Majesty. Alas, dear reader, he rejected me!

If you don't have better luck, at least you'll have the time of our life. Enjoy!

MIRELE EFRAT

By Ya'akov Gordin. Direction, Yoram Falk. The Yiddishspiel Theater at ZOA House, Tel Aviv. Cast: Orna Porat, Shmuel Atzmon, leading a cast of 12.

COMPARED with recent Yiddishspiel shows, *Mirele* is a relatively respectable production. Yet so much is still wanting.

First, respect for Yiddish as a language. Here it hardly exists. The gap between street Yiddish and the classic literary Litvish yawns ominously.

Next, a stripped set and mea-

ger props further dilute the power of the play. The affluent mansion of the great Gvir is only feebly evoked.

Nor are the rich overtones of period melodrama exploited to their fullest theatrical effect. Despite the support of live and lively klezmer music, even the acting shows strain.

The result is a rather bleak if well-meant crack at the classic Yiddish play.

This, despite the drawing power of a leading lady popular on our bigger stages. Orna Porat's Mirele is twin-sister to her Bernadette Alba or her Rebekkah in *Shindele*. The same crucified dignity, the same matriarchal terribleness. For genuine Jewish warmth she substitutes a warm stagey smile. Her mastery of Yiddish may delight *heinishe* audiences, but diction and delivery apart, hers remains a synthetic Mirele.

Mercifully, something of the true spirit of the traditional Yiddish stage is realized by Ethel Kovinsky (Maachle) and Angela Ya'akov (Chana Dvora). Shmuel Atzmon's Shalom rings authentic too. The rest are caricatures, with Tracy Abramovitch's Shindele, a barracuda of a bride, outspitting them all.

The only real reason this company merits survival is to preserve a rich part of cultural heritage. To do so worthily it has to raise its artistic sights. Why cast Porat, a stranger to the Yiddish genre, when there are available actors of stature like Shoshanna Ravid, Shmuel Segal, Miriam Zohar, Hannah Maron? For them Yiddish was the first stepping stone to the stage.



Henry VIII's love life comes in for some less-than-historical, but always hysterical treatment.

Revenge of the nerds

NEW RELEASES

TIRZAH AGASSI

I'M A creep" sang Radiohead back in '93. Great Britain was not amused, and *Pablo Honey*, the group's debut album, received a decidedly cold shoulder.

Israel, however, embraced the indie quintet from Oxford, giving them a hero's welcome when they arrived here last March.

It was only several months later, during summer vacation, that the single "Creep" took off in the US, becoming the theme song for just about every radio listener who had ever worried that they might fit into this dreaded category.

Suddenly, Radiohead was so platinum-selling successful that "Creep" had to be reissued back in Britain, where it instantly hit the Top Ten.

The scenario is pure "Revenge of the Nerds." Perhaps some social scientist somewhere can figure out the significance of Israel's having caught on to this one early. Suffice to say that the phenomenon is a source of great national pride, and with some justification, for Radiohead really is more than a one-hit wonder.

Their second album, *The Bends* (NMC), is just out and the British music press is falling all over itself singing its praises. This time the pans are saved for the Radioheads' coiffures. One otherwise enthusiastic critic went so far as to describe them and their lyrical offering as "Joni Mitchell on a bad hair day."

An earlier effort by lead singer Thom Yorke to glamorize his dorky image led to a bout with hair extensions that reportedly made him look like "the strange bastard son of Tina Turner."

It's a good album, but this is

hard to demonstrate with quoted lyrics, which tend to look a mite self-indulgent in black and white. If you haven't yet heard it, try to imagine these lines from the first single, "the bends" sung in a rather sweet, intelligent voice backed by plenty of thump and guitar:

"and my baby's got the bends we don't have any real friends / I'm just lying in a bar with my drip feed on talking to my girlfriend waiting for something to happen / and I wish it was the sixties / I wish I could be happy / I wish I wish I wish / that something would happen."

It may not be Shakespeare, but it is communicative and though the tone doesn't change a whole lot, much of the music on the album is downright melodic and oddly uplifting. No one here is claiming to be "stardust" or "golden" a la Woodstock, but the cynicism of the song ("nice dream") is offset by the idealistic generosity with which its longing is presented: "If you think you're strong enough / if you think you belong enough / nice dream."

Perhaps one ought to have outgrown the ability to identify with such far many years ago. But, as Joan Baez once pointed out: "adulthood is merely a rehearsal" and most people will find that if they let themselves, they can get a fair amount of pleasure from hearing this corner of the psyche explored so frankly.

Perhaps it is serendipitous that Israel was the first country to appreciate Radiohead's odd openness. In any event, identification with its message provides a welcome counterpoint to the bravado for which we are renowned.

Youth on parade: Orchestra displays brilliance; Chang saves chestnut

THIS concert, in which Kurt Masur conducted both the IPO and the Young Philharmonic Orchestra - separately, and then together in Dvorak's "From the New World" symphony - was a real celebration.

It was not only an evening of great expectation and hope, but also one which strongly established confidence in the future.

The event was also a moving testimony to the greatness of Masur not only as conductor but as a human being. He treated his young disciples with respect and bestowed on them all the honor to which they were entitled.

The concert started with a brilliant performance by the youngsters of Beethoven's "Egmont" overture, which demonstrated that a new brilliant generation of string players is in the offing.

The next item, the Brahms Violin Concerto, with Maxim Vengerov as soloist, and the IPO playing the orchestral part, was, regrettably, not as exciting. Vengerov plays as one expects every good violinist to play, but displays little musical personality.

The Dvorak symphony, however, was unforgettable. Masur, who cuts an incredibly noble and spiritually inspiring figure on the

podium, never allowed the presence of about 180 players tempt him into overdoing any aspect of the piece.

Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, March 6. Benjamin Bar-Am

THAT WE are again treated to the hackneyed Mendelssohn violin concerto is a shame, and that a very young but extremely talented violinist makes her local debut with it is an even greater shame.

Still, we cannot but praise 14-year-old Sarah Chang for her performance. She has verve, is emotionally involved and possesses an absolutely amazing tone. We would like to see her again with something less dusty.

A greater disappointment was conductor Andrew Litton, who was filling in for Klaus Tennstedt.

Trying to preserve Tennstedt's original program of Mendelssohn and Mahler's Fourth, the poor man had to conduct music which he does not understand. For the interpretation of Mahler it is not enough to swing the baton and be technically correct and accurate, one has to possess a soul.

Elzbieta Szymtka's thin and feeble soprano turned even the last movement into a parody.

Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, March 6. Benjamin Bar-Am

March 9. Benjamin Bar-Am

THE young Taiwanese pianist Lien Mao Shu presented a first local performance of Nikolai Sidelnikov's etudes-impromptus *America*, it is my love. Though Russian and contemporary, Sidelnikov sounds mostly impressionistic.

Lien produces a seductive, soft touch, contrasted with convincingly forceful passages and sharp accents, displayed with scintillating technique and an acute sense of rhythm. She seemed to express almost more than what the work has to say.

Russian-born pianist Gregory Haimovsky of New York revealed a more extroverted and assertive Debussy, in his Preludes Book I - all of it - than the subtlety with which one commonly hears it performed.

Targ Music Center, Jerusalem, March 11. Ury Eppstein

THERE was much water - sea water - in the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra's Subscription Concert No. 6: Elgar's *Sea Pictures* and Debussy's *La Mer*, besides his *L'apres-midi d'un Faune* and a somewhat out-of-context Mozart Symphony No. 34.

CONCERT ROUNDUP

One is grateful to contralto Mira Zakai for presenting Elgar's little known *Sea Interludes*. Her warm voice and touchingly emotional expression admirably fitted this highly Romantic and very personal song cycle.

Conductor Carl St. Clair, American in spite of his French-sounding name, bestowed all his loving care and considerable talents on the Debussy works, breathing and rich in instrumental colors and subtle shadings of dynamics. Mozart did not fare quite as well, emerging energetic and accurate, but also rectangular and matter-of-fact.

Jerusalem Theater, March 8. Ury Eppstein

FOR those who perhaps did not know that also Vivaldi wrote, inter alia, guitar concertos, the Caprisma Ensemble and Hazzan Feinstein volunteered to remind us of this. They did it with all the naughtiness and abandon of this, one of the most capricious composers.

Faithful to its policy of off-the-beaten-track programs, Caprisma presented Charles Ives in an in-

triguing Largo for clarinet, violin and piano (Ilin Schwartz, Lili Salvani, Israel Sharon). Though sounding unrelated, the instruments somehow achieved an inexplicably well-balanced texture.

The inexhaustible esprit of Poulenc, in his Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon, was realized by Schwartz and Jarco Frishitz.

Marcel Fargue's *Paganini Variations* provided a rare opportunity for the neglected bassoon to display some breakneck acrobatics, competently performed by Frishitz.

Contemporary Israel was represented by a Movement for String Quartet by Michael Wolfe (Mi-

chael Kominar, Katia Sibash, Tomer Hofman, Aysla Zeidelman).

Haydn's Military Symphony in an arrangement by Salomon, his concert manager, for flute, piano (Daphna Peled, Sharon), and string quartet had no more than curiosity value.

The Jerusalem Rubin Academy, March 6. Ury Eppstein

THE light opera group of the Negov's annual spring production was a splendidly bright, colorful and up-to-date version of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pastime*. There is much original dialogue. The sets of a shopping mall by Yarden Alkan

could have been any mall in Israel. The costumes, designed by Melanie Lombard, were instantly communicative. The staging by Helen Eleassari was not only engaging, but esthetically satisfying.

Casting and acting were just right this year. Marcus Myerowitz's masterly stage presence was notable. Solo singing by Mirna Bennett, Ed Spitz, and Lana Shalit, as well as the buoyant chorus singing, lent the production its amateur, homey quality.

Orchestral playing under Daniel Schwartzman was tight and disciplined.

Hechal Hatarbut, Beersheba, March 6. Max Stern

This bridge to London is falling down

DANCE REVIEW

DORA SOWDEN

ALL three of the choreographers competing for a three-week study course at the celebrated London theater called *The Place* (offered by the British Council), looked like they could benefit from some guidance, judging by the performance at Tel Aviv's Suzanne Dellal Theater on March 11.

This was all the more notable because none of them are beginners, all having appeared in the *Curtain Up* series. On this occasion, however, one seemed slightly obscure, another more than slightly absurd and the third seemed as scattered-brained as the other two.

Also disappointing was that there was so little in their performances that could be identified as Israeli. One even used a German song as basic to a large section.

Let good wishes go with the fortunate winner, Yasmin Vardimon.

She is now rehearsing the Inbal Company - "Working very hard," she says, but she gave a class to the students of the Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music and Dance on March 5, and enthralled everyone with her demonstration of Yemenite Jewish movement.

GIVING four women choreographers a platform for their talents was laudable enough, but Moshe Efrat enhanced the significance of the performance at Tel Aviv's Noga Theater by choosing March 6, International Women's Day, to stage their work.

There was much to admire in "Feminine Presence," the general title he gave the program, though each section had its own label: "Honey," by Anat Danjeli, "I'm Going Crazy," by Daniela Michaeli, "Stretch of the Belt," by Sa'ar Magal, and "Things One Talks About Now,"

by Rama Goren-Hakimi. Running them all together as a continuous show made it unclear which part could be attributed to whom. Putting the faces of the four dance makers on two huge screens and letting each explain her methods was novel, but

didn't really solve the puzzle.

One delightful part was a set of six "ghosts" appearing in a "dance macabre," while a voice sang about dreaming. Another amusing section was the gradual removal of chairs from under two dancers until they sat on air. Also there was a cheerful finale in which the whole Kol Demama company - all 18 members, who had performed excellently throughout - took their bows.

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15

THIS LAST WEEKS ON WEEK WEEK CHARTS		ARTIST	TITLE
#1	1	ANNE LENNOX	MEDUSA
#2	4	B. SPRINGSTEEN	GREATEST HITS
#3	2	FILM SOUND TRACK	TO BRING YOU MY LOVE
#4	12	P.J. HARVEY	CLASSICA
#5	1	MURIT GALRON	THE GRAND LOVE
#6	1	RITA	WOUNDS AND KISSES
#7	10	MONICA SEX	THE WEATHERMAN KNOWS
#8	3	AVTIPIUS	NINI AND DOR
#9	RE	ACHINOAM NINI	V.I.O.LENCE
#10	11	SHALOM HANVOCH	NO NEED TO ARGUE
#11	5	CRANBERRIES	HIT LIST 3
#12	8	VARIOUS ARTISTS	TRANCE SIDE OF ...
#13	9	VARIOUS ARTISTS	1492
#14	17	FILM SOUND TRACK	SO LONG, KIDS
#15	20	MASHINA	

Tower Records' top-selling albums for the previous week. RE - re-entry

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Shabbat stories and songs starring Chaim Topel and Henry Nechama for the entire family. Includes Lachs Ood, Shalom Aleichem, Hinei Me Toy, Yedid Huleish and Twenty others. Stories are portrayed in colorful clay animation. 45 min. Songs in Hebrew, narrative in English (PAL or NTSC) or Hebrew (PAL only). Scopus Films.
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BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1995

Sterling recovers after hitting low vs. mark

LONDON (Reuters) - The British pound recovered somewhat in late trading yesterday after it earlier dipped to a new low of 2.2155 marks in Tokyo - compared with its previous record low on March 8 of 2.2205 - as the stronger mark pressured everything, including the dollar.

The pound rebounded to 2.2406 in late trading. The pound was also at \$1.5926 in late trading, after closing at \$1.574 on Friday.

The earlier drop caused concern on the market.

The Bank of England closely watches the pound's trade weighted index, which measures the pound's value against a basket of currencies, as a measure of its strength or weakness. Any fall

sets alarm bells ringing at the central bank.

While the pound has a long way to go before it gets anywhere near its all-time low of \$1.0300 set in February 1985, it is getting dangerously close to its all-time low of 84.0 on the trade weighted index.

Earlier yesterday, the index was down at 84.9.

Analysts said the market is becoming more uncertain about sterling.

Investors are looking more at bearish factors, like weak economic data and the uncertain political backdrop.

A smaller than expected rise in factory gate prices in February and last week's fall in manufacturing output helped reinforce

the idea that the British economy is slowing down and that interest rates will not have to be raised again.

"The trade weighted index is in dangerous territory, and its fall has wiped out the recent tightening of interest rates," said Ian Amstad, British economist at Bankers Trust.

He noted the market's old four-for-one rule, whereby a four point move on the effective trade weighted index equals a one point move in interest rates.

This means the half-point rise in base rates since the turn of the year has been more than wiped out by a three-point drop in the effective index. "So since the start of the year we have had a net 0.25 point monetary easing."

Bank savings programs attract 40% more depositors last month

JOSE ROSENFELD and NEIL COHEN

BANK savings programs attracted nearly 40 percent more depositors last month than in January, corresponding to the large wave of redemptions from provident funds during the same period, the Treasury reported yesterday.

The savings programs accumulated a net NIS 1.13 billion in February, bringing this year's total to NIS 1.94b.

Index-linked programs which

promised real yields of about 4% for a minimum period of two years attracted NIS 1.23b. last month and NIS 2.15b. since the beginning of the year.

By contrast, provident funds, which registered an average negative yield of 8.5% last year, suffered NIS 2.2b. in withdrawals since the beginning of the year.

Dollar-linked savings programs continued to register withdrawals due to the weakness of the currency in world markets. Savers pulled out NIS 102.25 million from dollar-linked programs and NIS 207.65m. since the beginning of the year.

Meanwhile, First International Bank announced cumulative

yields for the first two months of the year on its provident funds.

Its largest fund, Meitav, with assets of NIS 908m., lost 3.91% in real terms in the period. Its second largest fund, Keren, lost 3.88%. The real returns of other funds were as follows: Hamlaia -3.2%, Admor -4.08%, Mishlaia -4.08%, Tohele -4.23%, and Teiza -6.33%.

Poor results force MacPell to cut staff in half

RACHEL NEIMAN

MACPELL announced yesterday it will be forced to reduce its workforce by 50 percent after suffering a 13% decline in revenues last year.

The company has not yet released its annual results, but it

suffered net losses in both 1993 and 1992.

The textile manufacturer, which counts the Gap as a major customer also said Palmach

Ze'evi has replaced Nir Bashan as co-general manager and will take on several additional operational duties.

The company said it was also

forced to take other efficiency measures, including sub-contracting to outside manufacturers.

The company said it was influenced by significant wage increases last year, a trend expected to continue this year.

Major's delegation a Who's Who in British business

NEIL COHEN

JOHN Major may be the most unpopular British prime minister since World War II, but there was no telling it from the delegation of businessmen accompanying him on his current visit.

The size, and especially the rank, of the delegation was impressive.

Even excluding old friends like former Cable and Wireless chairman Lord Young, who is a former trade secretary, P&O chairman Lord Sterling and Volvo distributor Sir Trevor China, the group was packed with heavyweights from a broad range of business sectors.

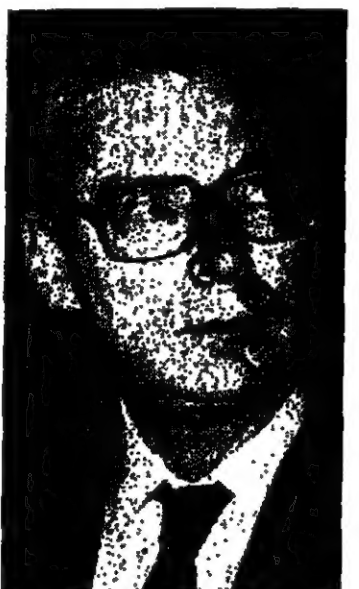
There was British Gas chairman Dick Giordano; Reuters chairman Sir Christopher Hogg; MP Sir Tim Sainsbury and member of the eponymous supermar-

kets family; United Biscuits chairman Sir Robert Clarke; Marks and Spencer chairman Sir Richard Greenbury and BZW deputy head Donald Brydon.

Perhaps most notable were Michael Lester, vice chairman of GEC (the British General Electric Company), and Jerry Wooding, executive vice president for defense marketing at British Aerospace.

"It is remarkable that they are here," one senior member of the delegation said. "GEC and BAe don't gamble with their existing customers," referring to the companies' strong links with the Arab world.

Sterling, whose subsidiary Bovis will be building the new terminal at Ben-Gurion Airport, was cautiously upbeat about pros-



MP Sir Tim Sainsbury (Ariel Jerolimski)



P&O chairman Lord Sterling (Ariel Jerolimski)

pects for his company here, noting that P&O cruise and cargo ships are regular visitors at Israeli ports.

He said the government here was trying to interest P&O and its real estate and construction subsidiaries in helping develop an industrial park in Gaza.

Young said that C&W, Britain's second largest telecommunications company and owner of Hong Kong Telecom, was interested in teaming up with Bezeq when international phone services are privatized, but would not participate in a bid to run a competing service.

Court denies request to halt sale of Israel Shipyards

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court yesterday refused a request by disappointed bidder Admiral Shipyards and Investments Ltd. for an injunction against the sale of Israel Shipyards to SKO Car Investments.

This means there is no further barrier to the sale if the Knesset Finance Committee approves it today.

Admiral asked for the injunction as part of a request for permission to appeal the Tel Aviv District Court's rejection of its petition against the tender.

However, Justice Theodor Orr said he accepted the lower court's reasoning, and therefore saw no reason to issue the injunction.

Admiral was challenging the tender results on three counts. The company said Shlomo Shmelzer, who owns 50 percent of SKO and is therefore acquiring 25% of Israel Shipyards, is the subject of a criminal investigation for tax crimes.

It is improper, Admiral said, to sell a monopolistic public company to someone under such a shadow.

Second, the company said, the tender process was unfair. Two earlier rounds were canceled because the government was not satisfied with the offers, but Admiral's bid - which was the highest in the second round - was widely publicized.

Therefore, Admiral said, SKO had unfair knowledge about its competitor's intentions.

Ramon: Rights of workers must be guaranteed

"If there is no agreement guaranteeing the rights of the workers at Israel Shipyards, the workers will not allow the sale of the shipyards to the SKO Car Group," Histadrut Chairman Haim Ramon said yesterday during a visit to the complex.

Shipyards workers, who have been barricaded inside the complex for six days, jubilantly welcomed Ramon.

He told them the Histadrut had already decided to pay the workers' salaries for their strike days.

"I'm sorry that the government sells the shipyards first and only later conducts negotiations," Ramon told them. "The issue is not whether we're for or against privatization. We only have one issue at hand: that when the government decides it no longer wants to own the shipyards, it must reach an agreement with the workers."

"The workers aren't machines, but part of the process, and all the privatizations until now were done on condition that first an agreement was signed with the workers," Ramon said.

He called on the workers to maintain certain rules of the game in their struggle, so as not to lose public support.

"Unfortunately, only after strong steps were taken by the workers did the government remember to talk with their representatives and Histadrut representatives about the workers' rights," Ramon said. "This could have been prevented, and it's a shame that this is how privatization is achieved in the state of Israel." (Itm)

It also argued that the price should not be the sole factor in the tender, but ability to manage the company should count as well.

However, Orr said both Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair and the Tel Aviv District Court found that while the allegations against Shmelzer were a factor to be considered, they did not

necessarily disqualify the sale.

Orr said he was also satisfied with the lower court's finding that the existence of two previous rounds of the tender did not affect the third round, and there was nothing wrong with the government accepting the highest bid.

SKO bid NIS 40.5 million, while Admiral offered only NIS 33.6m.

Overseas issue of Israel Chemicals approved

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved an overseas issue of 22 percent of Israel Chemicals Ltd.

The only nay vote was from Dan Tichon (Likud), who objected to selling the company when the US market is in a slump.

"It's a scandal to issue ICL at the present prices," he said. "[The issue] shouldn't be done at any price. Why should we give gifts to the whole world's citizens?"

Most of the committee was reassured on this point by Government Companies Authority Chairman Yossi Nitzani, who told the committee on Thursday that the issue will not necessarily take place right now if the prices look bad.

The government merely wants to get the preparations in place, Nitzani said, and no more work can be done without the committee's approval.

Tichon, however, warned that once the preparations were under way, there would be enormous pressure not to stop it.

The government also has a stake in a quick issue, because prior to the bidding for a controlling stake in ICL, the government promised that the international issue would closely follow the sale so the bidders would know their newly-acquired shares were negotiable.

Tichon also charged that the government is laying itself open to lawsuits, because the local pro-

some shares will be offered in Europe. The government itself is offering only 13%-15% of ICL, however.

The balance of the 22% will be offered by Shoul Eisenberg, whose Israel Corporation recently bought a controlling stake in the company.

Net profits fall at Super-Sol

COMPANY RESULTS

RACHEL NEIMAN

SUPER-SOL reported a 17.5 percent drop in annual net profits to NIS 51.6 million from NIS 62.68m. in 1993, while earnings per share fell to NIS 2.97 from NIS 3.58.

Revenues rose to NIS 2 billion from NIS 1.8b.

Fourth quarter net profits declined to NIS 20m. from NIS 21.7m. in the parallel period.

The company said it suffered losses on new businesses last year, specifically a loss of some NIS 3m. on Super Offices and some NIS 2m. on a Budapest-based subsidiary.

The company incurred a NIS 1m. loss on its part in the Home Center group.

The company received one-time revenues of NIS 34.6m. on the sales of various properties in 1994.

Delek announced a rise in consolidated net profits to NIS 70.5m. from NIS 47.8m. in 1993, while earnings per share went up to NIS 7.3 from NIS 4.96.

Annual revenues were NIS 3.1b. from NIS 2.7b.

Fourth quarter revenues rose to NIS 20.1m. from NIS 11.6m.

Dead Sea Works annual net profits rose to \$40.9m. from \$27.5m. in 1993; while earnings per share went up to \$0.09 from \$0.06.

Revenues rose to \$632.1m. from \$549.4m.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bank Discount workers plan to strike at all bank branches on Friday. So far this week, workers have closed several branches in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem and cut management's phone and electricity lines. They are seeking a 14% wage increase over their 1994 salaries, while management is only prepared to offer 8.5%. The workers are also seeking an agreement regarding grades and overtime for 1995 and the payment of fees for additional health care packages. Itm

Osem announced yesterday it is negotiating with Swiss-based multinational Nestle concerning both strategic partnerships and distribution. Osem CEO Dan Propper said his company would distribute Nestle products here in the first stage.

Bill to ban Israeli advertising on satellite TV stations rejected: The Knesset Economics Committee yesterday rejected a bill to ban Israeli advertising on satellite TV stations. The bill's sponsors, Tzahi Hanegbi (Likud) and Ra'anam Cohen (Labor), charged that advertising on satellite stations broke the legal monopoly on TV ads given to the New Channel 2.

Paz Chen signs letter of intent to buy Holland Israel: Jewelry manufacturer Paz Chen has signed a letter of intent to acquire Holland Israel, a private company which imports gold and manufactures and markets jewelry. Paz Chen will issue 16.7 percent of its fully diluted share capital to the owners of Holland Israel.

The controlling shareholders in Malibu Israel, Yochai Schneider and Sefi Shalgi, together with managers Meri Shani and Natan Frankel, have offered to buy 25.34 percent of the 35% series 1 shares owned by public shareholders and all the outstanding series 5 shares.

They have offered to buy both at prices of NIS 6 per share, representing premiums of 29% and 28% respectively to the shares' closing prices at the end of business last week.

Committee to review country's tax policy on cigarettes: Finance Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday named a committee to review the country's tax policy on cigarettes. The Treasury began changing the tax on cigarettes in 1988 to reduce the monopolistic power of Dubek, the local producer which until then was assured 75% of the market.

The committee will review if Dubek is still a monopoly. If it is, the present cigarette tax regime is unlikely to be changed. However, if Dubek has ceased being a monopoly, the tax may change to preserve local production. The committee will be headed by deputy States Revenues Director Avi Lavon.

MKs asked to extend loan guarantees to TAAS: Finance Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday asks the Knesset Finance Committee to extend for an additional two years state loan guarantees which are about to expire to TAAS-Israel Industries for \$100 million. Shohat also asked the committee to approve \$80m. in guarantees to Israel Aircraft Industries.

Treaty for prevention of double taxation signed with China: Income Tax Commissioner Doron Levy yesterday announced that a draft treaty for the prevention of double taxation was signed with the Chinese. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat is expected to sign the treaty during his visit to China in April.

Rada, United Airlines in talks

RACHEL NEIMAN

RADA Electronic Industries is negotiating a sale of its SMART CATS commercial aviation inspection system to United Airlines. Rada announced yesterday.

United will use the system to maintain Boeing 777s, considered the new standard for commercial airliners.

Initial contact with United was initiated at the end of last year, when Rada's contract with British Airways was renewed and a second SMART CATS system was purchased at a \$2 million investment.

BA's new system is similar to the one now being negotiated with United.

Rada CEO Haim Nissenson said if the order was accepted by United, it would be "a continued expression of confidence of the international aviation market in the SMART CATS system."

Nissenson added that BA's renewal order "means this system is suitable to the widest possible niche market in the commercial aviation industry, ranging from maintenance centers to large airlines."

Other SMART CATS commercial clients include US AIR, Continental, Air Mauritius, China United and the maintenance company serving JFK.

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UCLA top seed in NCAA West

Kentucky, Kansas, Wake Forest round out No.1 seeds; UConn 2nd in West regional

KANSAS CITY (AP) — UCLA, which last won the college basketball championship 20 years ago in coach John Wooden's last game, was made a No. 1 seed Sunday in the NCAA tournament along with Kentucky, Wake Forest and Kansas.

The Bruins go into the tournament as the top team in The AP poll and it's the first time they've gone in ranked No. 1, since winning the title in 1975 when Wooden took the last of his 10 championships in 12 years.

In all 10 of those title runs, UCLA entered the tournament ranked No. 1.

The Bruins, the Pacific 10 conference champion and the No. 1 seed in the West regional, play their first game Friday against Florida International, winners of the Trans America Athletic Conference with an 11-18 record.

The NCAA tournament, also known as March Madness, is a 64-team, knockout tournament, divided into four regions that begins Thursday and will conclude April 1-3 with the Final Four, the semifinals and final, in Seattle.

Kentucky was made the No. 1 seed in the Southeast region after defeating Arkansas 95-93 in overtime to win the Southeastern Conference (SEC) championship. Kansas was the top seed in the Midwest despite losing in the Big Eight conference tourna-



WAY OUT WEST — Sophomore guard Doron Sheffer leads UConn against Tennessee-Chattanooga.

ment. And Wake Forest, which beat North Carolina 82-80 in overtime to win its first Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) tournament since 1962, headed the East region.

Kentucky plays Mount St.

Mary's of Maryland, while Kansas takes on Colgate and Wake Forest plays North Carolina A-and-T, all on Thursday.

Three of the four No. 1 seeds have long histories of success in the NCAA tournament. UCLA

has a record 10 national titles, while Kentucky's five titles is tied for second-best with Indiana. Kansas has won the NCAA championship twice.

Wake Forest is the only one of the four No. 1 seeds without a national championship.

The No. 2 seed in the East went to Atlantic 10 Conference (A10) champion Massachusetts. The second seed in the Southeast was North Carolina, while defending champion Arkansas got the No. 2 seed in the Midwest. Connecticut, which lost the Big East Conference title game to Villanova, will travel to the West regional as the No. 2 seed. The Huskies (26-4) will face Tennessee-Chattanooga (19-10) at Salt Lake City on Thursday.

NCAA seedings
EAST
1. Wake Forest 2. Massachusetts 3. Villanova 4. Oklahoma State 5. Alabama 6. Tulsa 7. North Carolina-Charlotte 8. Minnesota 9. St. Louis 10. Stanford 11. Illinois 12. Pennsylvania 13. Drexel 14. Old Dominion 15. St. Peter's 16. North Carolina A&T.

SOUTHEAST
1. Kentucky 2. North Carolina 3. Michigan State 4. Oklahoma State 5. Georgetown 6. Iowa State 7. Brigham Young 8. Tulane 9. Florida 10. Xavier 11. Ohio State 12. Seton Hall 13. Marquette 14. Weber State 15. Murray State 16. Mount St. Mary's 17. Maryland.

MIDWEST
1. Kansas 2. Arkansas 3. Purdue 4. Virginia 5. Arizona 6. Memphis 7. Syracuse 8. W. Kentucky 9. Michigan 10. Southern Illinois 11. Louisville 12. Miami 13. North Dakota 14. West Virginia 15. Mississippi Valley State 16. Colgate.

WEST
1. UCLA 2. Connecticut 3. Maryland 4. Utah 5. Mississippi State 6. Oregon 7. Cincinnati 8. Missouri 9. Indiana 10. Temple 11. Texas 12. Santa Clara 13. Long Beach State 14. Gonzaga 15. Tennessee-Chattanooga 16. Florida International.

Tiporo's last-second shot gives Hapoel TA derby win

RICHARD ZAACKS

MEYER Tiporo's last-second shot gave Hapoel Tel Aviv an 83-82 win over crosstown rivals Maccabi in the Tel Aviv derby last night to move into a three-way tie for second place.

With the win, Hapoel has a 17-8 record together with Hapoel Galil Elyon and Hapoel Holon. Maccabi, which has already clinched first place in the league, drops to 22-3.

In the only other scheduled National Basketball League game last night, Hapoel Givataim beat Betar Ramat Gan 131-78.

Maccabi started out with hot shooting to take an 18-11 lead after five minutes, and before Hapoel could get its act together, the Maccabians, with Guy Goodes leading the way with 12 points, opened up a 35-21 lead.

But Hapoel started to get in sync near the end of the first half

with Lior Arditi and Buck Johnson finding the range. Maccabi went into the dressing room with a 42-31 halftime advantage.

Five minutes into the second half, Maccabi opened up the biggest margin of the night, 56-38, with Jeff Kent — playing in place of Nadav Henefeld — scoring nine points in five minutes and it looked like curtains for the red shirts.

But the Hapoelites never gave up the ghost and came roaring back on the accurate shooting of Johnson, Milton Wagner, Tiporo and Arditi. The foursome put together a 21-8 run to cut the lead to six with 10:40 to go.

With 1:12 left, Wagner gave Hapoel its first lead at 79-78.

Then followed a free-throw trade-off between Maccabi's Radisav Curcic and Wagner that

gave the defending champions an 82-81 lead with 28 seconds left. Running down the clock, Hapoel fed the ball to Tiporo who performed his heroics with one-second on the clock to seal the victory.

For Hapoel, Johnson and Wagner sank 24 apiece, Arditi 17 and Tiporo 9.

Maccabi was led by Goodes with 17, followed by Curcic's 14. Norris Coleman and Kent each netted 12, Henefeld 11 and Doron Jamchec 8.

National Basketball League

	W	L	Pct.	GB
1. Maccabi Tel Aviv	22	3	.47	
2. Hapoel Galil Elyon	17	8	.42	
3. Hapoel Holon	17	8	.42	
4. Hapoel Tel Aviv	17	8	.42	
5. Maccabi Rishon	16	9	.41	
6. Be'er Sheva	16	9	.41	
7. Hapoel Jerusalem	14	11	.38	
8. Hapoel Eilat	12	13	.38	
9. Maccabi Ramat Gan	12	13	.38	
10. Maccabi Netanya	11	14	.36	
11. Hapoel Givataim	11	14	.36	
12. Hapoel Haifa	8	19	.31	
13. Hapoel Givataim	8	20	.30	
14. Betar Ramat Gan	0	25	.00	

Shaq breaks Robinson jinx

ORLANDO (AP) — Shaquille O'Neal struggled much of the fourth quarter before delivering a dunk and two free throws in the final minute to help the Orlando Magic hold off the San Antonio Spurs 110-104 Sunday for his first victory over nemesis David Robinson.

The Spurs were the only team the Magic hadn't beaten since O'Neal entered the NBA three seasons ago. Robinson holds the statistical edge in the six meetings between the All-Star centers, and had 34 points and 12 rebounds to O'Neal's 28 points and 13 rebounds in the latest matchup.

Anfernee Hardaway led Orlando with 31 points, 20 of them in the second half. Nick Anderson scored 13 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter when the Magic pulled away from a 90-90 tie in the last 5:52.

O'Neal was only 10-for-24 from the field and had been outscored 14-2 by Robinson in the final period before slamming in an offensive rebound for a 104-99 lead and hitting two free throws that made it 106-100 with 36.7 seconds remaining.

Robinson finished 12-of-21 and got offensive support from Sean Elliott, who had 20 points for San Antonio.

Trail Blazers 102, Timberwolves 88. Buck Williams and Otis Thorpe, sharing time at power forward, combined for 39 points and 18 rebounds for visiting Portland.

Williams had 19 points and 12 rebounds and Thorpe added 20 points and six boards as the Blazers maintained their perfect record (12-0) in Minnesota.

Christian Laettner had 21 points and Tom Gugliotta added 17 for the

Dumas can play in NBA

Richie Dumas, suspended by the NBA 1½ years ago for refusing to cooperate in drug-abuse rehabilitation, yesterday was cleared to resume his career with the Phoenix Suns.

The 6-foot-7 forward was suspended for the entire 1991-92 season after failing a random drug test as a rookie. He then played for Hapoel Holon. In 1993, he was suspended indefinitely. Dumas was about to board a plane for the season opener in Seattle on November 1, 1991, when the team learned he had failed a drug test. He was suspended until December 1992.

Volves. Dehydration from a stomach illness limited Isaiah Rider, Minnesota's leading scorer, to just 10 minutes and 3 points.

The Blazers, who led throughout the game, wrapped up their six-game, nine-day road trip by winning three of the last four games.

Hawes 104, Celtics 98. Ken Norman scored 13 of his season-high 34 points in the fourth period, and visiting Atlanta went over the .500 mark for the first time this season.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	46	16	.742	
San Antonio	41	18	.695	3.5
Houston	38	24	.613	6
Denver	29	32	.475	15.5
Dallas	22	38	.370	22
Minnesota	17	45	.274	29

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Phoenix	48	18	.726	
Seattle	41	19	.683	4
LA Lakers	37	23	.617	8
Portland	33	27	.550	12
Sacramento	30	30	.500	15
Golden State	19	41	.317	26
LA Clippers	13	50	.206	33.5

*directed playoff berth.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	48	14	.774	
New York	38	21	.650	8
New Jersey	35	27	.563	12
Boston	34	27	.558	12.5
Atlanta	25	36	.417	24.5
Philadelphia	17	44	.278	32.5
Washington	15	44	.254	34

Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Charlotte	39	25	.610	
Indiana	37	25	.597	1.5
Cleveland	31	31	.500	4
Chicago	31	31	.500	4.5
Detroit	28	38	.423	7.5
Memphis	22	38	.371	13.5

SUNDAY'S RESULTS:

Orlando 116, San Antonio 104. Cleveland 92, Philadelphia 73. Denver 100, Milwaukee 93. Atlanta 104, Boston 98. Portland 102, Minnesota 88. Utah 96, Miami 86. Sacramento 105, LA Clippers 93. Seattle 134, Detroit 94. Golden State 124, Phoenix 117 (OT).

Cricket masters continue to sparkle

CRICKET lovers on four continents were given a rare treat over the past two weeks.

We in Israel were also very fortunate to witness a most innovative and thrilling tournament, the BSI World Masters Challenge Cup from Bombay, where many great players of the modern era gathered for a ten-day tournament that kept me glued to the TV screen.

Such is the nature of cricket, that its unique pace and technique allows even the "old timers" to put on a sparkling show and keep us entertained.

To have been able to see the majestic strokeplay of South Africans Barry Richards and Graeme Pollock, two of the greatest batsmen of the modern era, who were denied the opportunity to play their skills in the Test arena was well worth every second of viewing time. As was Dilip Vengsarkar's incredible centu-

ry for India in the final, and the masterful spin bowling displays of England's Derek Underwood and John Emburey.

All of the players from India, West Indies, Sri Lanka, Australia, England and South Africa had to be at least 35 years old.

The West Indies won the tournament by beating India in the final in front of a packed house of 50,000 at the Brabourne Stadium in Bombay. They turned up with a team which, when it was in its prime in the 1970s and '80s, was literally invincible. Even today many younger, fitter sides would have trouble facing up to the likes of Gordon Greenidge and Vivian Richards.

Barry Richards and Pollock, having both posted half-centuries in years, are more like two decades years past their peak but their sparkle remains undiminished.

Prime Sports are to be commended for having relayed every ball of the tournament to — they claim — an audience of some 250 million viewers.

The commentary team did a great job and innovations of wiring the captains and the umpires for sound, so that we could hear their views on the state of play from the middle was also very enlightening.

There was hardly a dull moment throughout the 10-day event, and if there were purists who complained that a group of overweight, pot-bellied has-beens should never have gone onto the pitch, this competition proved them totally wrong.

Michael Jordan practiced yesterday with the Chicago Bulls for the third time in a week, but left without commenting on his future.

Coach Phil Jackson said he hoped Jordan would return but said he really didn't know if it would happen. Jackson said the

key likely would be Jordan's talks with club owner Jerry Reinsdorf, and all of the parties involved say those talks have not even begun.

"When Michael makes his decision, why can't we just all wait for him to make it?" Reinsdorf said. "He needs to be left alone so he can think. If he wants to consult with anybody, he can."

"I really don't know. My heart says he's going to come back and play. That's just wishful thinking right now," said Jackson.

Reinsdorf said early Sunday before leaving Arizona for the baseball talks in Florida that he still hasn't discussed the basketball situation with Jordan and he had no knowledge of an announcement about his future.

He claimed he and Jordan last talked Thursday night when Jordan informed him he was giving up baseball. Reinsdorf reiterated he didn't know which way Jordan was leaning and said he wouldn't reveal it if he did.

Jordan keeps hoops world guessing

CHICAGO (AP) — Michael's mystery has everyone on edge. What's he going to do? Play basketball or not? And when's he going to let everyone in on his plans?

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What's an FA Cup semi without Wembley?

LONDON (AP) — For the first time in three years, Wembley Stadium will not be hosting a Football Association Cup semifinal.

The FA yesterday picked Elland Road in Leeds and Villa Park in Birmingham as the venues for this season's semis, both to be played April 9.

Elland Road will host the Tottenham-Everton semifinal, while Villa Park will be the site for the match between defending champion Manchester United and the winner of the Crystal Palace-Wolverhampton quarter-final replay on March 22.

In 1993 and 1994, both semis were played at Wembley, and critics claimed the "hallowed turf" was being overused.

This year's FA Cup final is scheduled for Wembley on May 20.

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Behr, Okun advance to 2nd round in Jaffa satellite

HEATHER CHAIT

ONLY two Israelis reached the second round of the third leg of the Club Hotel Eilat satellite in Jaffa yesterday with five others making an early exit.

Today, top seed and winner of the previous two satellites, Eyal Erlich, plays his first-round match against qualifier Tobias Hildebrand of Sweden. Gilad Bloom, seeded third, plays qualifier Georg Blumauer of Austria.

Noam Behr, seeking a spot in the upcoming Davis Cup side against Norway, played solid tennis to defeat Markus Tanner of Switzerland 6-2, 6-3; and Noam Okun, a wildcard entry, defeated Nir Welgreen 7-6(1), 6-2.

After reaching last week's

quarter-final round, Lior Mor, seeded fifth, disappointed by losing to Spain's Ignacio Truvel 6-4, 6-3.

Other Israeli losses were Yoni Erlich to Danielle Bracciali of Italy 6-2, 7-5; Amir Hadad to Slovenia's Jaka Bozic 4-6, 6-3, 6-1 and Kobi Ziv to Hungary's Szolt Fule 6-4, 6-2.

The Ada Moros women's satellite, largely dominated by Israeli's young crop of players, also began yesterday in Jaffa.

Local players through to the second round are Nataly Chahna, Meirav Duek, Eila Goldshuvy, Anat Katz, Tamir Keren, Hadar Ronen, Sarit Shalev and Shir Zlotikman.

SCOREBOARD

NHL — SUNDAY'S RESULTS: Florida 4, Hartford 1; Washington 3, Tampa Bay 1; Philadelphia 4, New Jersey 3; Detroit 2, St. Louis 1; Calgary 4, Dallas 4; Vancouver 5, Edmonton 2.

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Judges likely to get 40% pay raise

JUDGES' salaries would rise by 40% or more, according to a proposal likely to be adopted by the Knesset Finance Committee.

Though the committee deferred its vote yesterday to obtain additional data, most MKs said they favored a compromise proposal by chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor). The increase requested by Supreme Court President Meir Shamgar could have totaled as much as 200%.

The judges claim they have not gotten a raise for years, and say many lawyers do not want to become judges because the salary is so low.

According to figures published by Gal, however, judges are by far the highest paid public officials. Shamgar earns NIS 29,340 and Deputy Supreme Court President Aharon Barak earns NIS 26,380, compared to NIS 24,942 for President Ezer Weizman.

Ordinary Supreme Court justices earn NIS 19,046 – more than Prime Minister Yitzhak

EVELYN GORDON

Rabin, who earns NIS 16,023 – and district court judges, at NIS 14,649, earn more than cabinet ministers, at NIS 14,280.

Furthermore, many of the additions the judges are demanding, such as car allowance, were included in the judges' base salary in 1979.

"All these components were added to their salaries at that time so the judges wouldn't come to the Finance Committee anymore," said Dan Tichon (Likud), who, with Michael Elan (Likud), was one of the only opponents. "But MKs don't like to disagree with judges. Therefore, MKs shouldn't discuss judges' salaries."

Tichon said an independent public commission should be set up to deal with the issue. But most MKs disagreed.

"Judges need to earn more than any other sector, because a judge needs to be completely financially independent," agreed

Elie Goldschmidt (Labor).

However, Elhanani said the comparison with lawyers' salaries is misleading, because lawyers must pay for the upkeep of their offices and their pensions.

Gal's proposal would leave judges' base salary untouched (Shamgar wanted a 39% increase), but would add a special 15% increment (Shamgar wanted 30%) and increase the seniority increment from 0.55% a year to 4% for the first five years and 1% after that (Shamgar wanted 2.5% a year).

In addition, judges will now get a sabbatical every 12 years and the use of a car (previously, cars were given only to judges who had to travel for their jobs). Finally, judges who are not promoted to a higher court after seven years will get a 50% pay rise as compensation.

The one remaining argument is over when the raises will start. Gal proposed January 1, but the judges want it retroactive to September 1993.



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin gives a prize yesterday to participants in the 32nd annual Galilee Race, which ended at the Tel Hai memorial. The race was part of the events marking 75 years since Joseph Trumpeldor and others fell in the defense of the area. (Avihu Shapiro/PPA)

IDF rejects idea of external probes of its accidents

EVELYN GORDON

ALLOWING an outside body to investigate army accidents would undermine faith in the Judge Advocate-General's office, and is completely unnecessary, Judge Advocate-General Ilan Schiff told the ministerial committee on legislation yesterday.

The committee was discussing a collection of private member's bills from nearly every faction, which would transfer investigations of fatal accidents to an outside body. It did not finish its deliberations yesterday, however.

Schiff said that if these bills were passed, in a year or two people would be crying to reverse them, because "the army tends to take a harsher stand than the civilian (legal) system" with regard to both prosecution and punishment – even of senior officials.

"The level of punishment [for manslaughter] in military courts is higher than in the Supreme Court – and justly so," he said, noting that manslaughter sentences issued by the Supreme Court are often a few months at most, and sometimes merely suspended.

Furthermore, he said, military courts often add demotion to imprisonment.

"Demotion is frequently considered a worse punishment than imprisonment – especially among [senior] officers," he said.

Schiff said charges that army investigations took too long were also unjustified. Seventy percent of investigations were finished within five months, he said, and this is very reasonable.

Finally, he rejected the idea that army investigations are like the police investigating itself, stressing that the investigations unit is subject only to him, and not to any of the operational commanders.

With the police, he said, the problem was that jobs rotated so the officer investigating police brutality today feared being charged with the same tomorrow. Army investigators, however, are never in operational roles, he said.

"The army does not investigate itself," he said.

Two public commissions looked into the matter and decided to leave the situation as is, he added.

Olmert: Jerusalem celebrations open to all faiths

THE Jerusalem 3000 celebrations should include events not related to Judaism, to show that the city is open to all faiths, Mayor Ehud Olmert told the Knesset Economics Committee yesterday.

The committee was discussing a motion for the agenda by Avraham Verdiger (UTJ) on the non-religious events planned for the festival. The festival planners, Verdiger said, should take the sensibilities of the city's population – which is largely religious or traditional – into account, and should not defile Jerusalem's holiness.

Olmert, however, said the celebrations

EVELYN GORDON

were a unique opportunity to present Jerusalem to the entire world, and should not be wasted.

"Jerusalem today is a city that permits a freedom of religion which never existed before," he said, "and we have an interest in demonstrating this to the entire world."

The festival's events would not be political in character, he added, but would focus on the capital's 3,000-year history.

Committee chairman Gideon Patt (Likud) agreed with Olmert.

"By including events which do not have a Jewish character, we can show that Jerusalem in our hands has not been taken away from the rest of the world," he said.

Patt added that the several-month-long celebrations were expected to draw many visitors to the city, and therefore should not be turned into a purely haredi event.

Olmert also denied Verdiger's claims that the city was sponsoring a Broadway show about King David, which is being produced by Tim Rice and Allan Menken. This story, he said, was "a figment of a journalist's imagination."

IDA upset over illegal dental clinics

JUDY SIEGEL

THE Israel Dental Association is threatening to petition the High Court of Justice against the "growing number" of illegal commercial dental clinics if the State Attorney's Office does not take action to close them down.

The IDA claimed that over 300 commercial clinics operate without a license or supervision.

"This allows the entry into dentistry of commercial interests whose motivation is mainly financial. They lower the level of dentistry and are more likely to be involved in cases of medical negligence," said IDA chairman Dr. Yitzhak Chen.

He added that in order to attract patients, such clinics use gimmicks and illegal advertising that "mislead" the public.

Chen said that in the past, the IDA demanded that the Health Ministry publicize a list of all the illegal clinics and take action to prevent them from operating. "But so far, no significant steps have been taken," he said, thus the IDA has asked the state attorney to push the ministry to take action.

Asked to comment, ministry spokeswoman Yifat Ben-Hai said the ministry does deal with license requests from commercial clinics. It has so far issued 16 licenses and is dealing with 400 other requests that have been received.

"The ministry is working to carry out the regulations and to close illegal clinics," she stated.

Weiss considering banning Kach from Knesset building

LIAT COLLINS

KNESSET Speaker Shevah Weiss is considering banning members of the outlawed Kach and Kahane Chai movements from entering the Knesset building. The announcement came in the light of statements by the groups' members that they intend visiting the Knesset today as the guests of Moledet MK Shaul Guttman.

Guttman said the invitation is personal and on an individual basis, and that the banned groups were not planning on holding official meetings. Kach members, on the other hand, said they would hold an executive meeting at the Knesset.

Last week some 15 Kach members, including two under house arrest, apparently held an executive

meeting in an empty Knesset committee room. News of their visit infuriated many MKs, although an initial investigation showed that their names were not on the list of those banned from entering the Knesset building.

The list is usually reserved for those the police recommend be banned for criminal or security reasons.

Weiss strongly condemned the meeting. He said according to regulations, he could ask those wishing to enter the Knesset to grant him permission to review details of their police records. If they agree to this request, he would consult with the police and then consider whether or not to allow them into the building.

Meshulam appeals conviction

EVELYN GORDON

UZI Meshulam and 10 of his followers yesterday appealed their convictions to the Supreme Court, arguing that their trial was unfair.

Meshulam was convicted in Tel Aviv District Court of interfering with a policeman in the line of duty, attempted assault, illegal weapons possession, threats, disrupting a trial, and willfully endangering human life on the roads. He was sentenced to eight years in prison, and his followers received sentences ranging from 15 months to 4½ years.

The appeal charged that the trial was unfair for two main reasons. One was a series of procedural decisions made by the judge, including his refusal to delay the start of the trial though Meshulam had switched lawyers only four days before, his refusal to provide two state-appointed

lawyers to assist on the case, and his refusal to let the lawyers tape the trial. These decisions, Meshulam's lawyers said, made it impossible for them to prepare properly.

The other main reason was that Meshulam and his followers were absent for most of the trial. Although this was at their own request – and the judge said they were welcome to notify him if they changed their mind – it is nevertheless against the law for a felony case to be conducted in the absence of the accused, the appeal argued.

The appeal also charged that the prosecution failed to give the defense all the relevant material, and that the prison staff ignored a court order to give Meshulam video equipment, so he could study the videos submitted by the defense.

NII sanctions blocking switching of health funds

JUDY SIEGEL

RESIDENTS who want to switch health funds are having difficulty because of prolonged sanctions by National Insurance Institute staffers, who are demanding more pay for the extra work involved in administering the national health insurance system.

Individuals are continuing to apply to the health funds, but some have been told that their acceptance is dependent on the NII's processing of the "declaration" that they have been members of a different health fund for at least a year.

However, NII workers are refusing to have anything to do with implementing the national health insurance system's arrangements until they get a pay hike.

NII management yesterday proposed to arbitrate the dispute.

Health Ministry spokeswoman

Yifat Ben-Hai acknowledged that there was a problem regarding acceptance of new members.

"Health Minister Ephraim Sneh is in contact with Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir [who bears ministerial responsibility for the NII]. He hopes the deadline for switching health funds – March 31 – will not have to be put off."

Only those who register with a new health fund by that date will be accepted as members starting July 1; the others will have to wait to register by September 30 and to be accepted on January 1, 1996.

Ben-Hai declined to comment on whether Sneh favored higher pay for NII staffers because of the extra work involved in the national health insurance system, saying "this is not his responsibility; he has enough in his own sphere to do."

Begin going to Egypt after all

LIKUD MK Ze'ev Binyamin Begin will be traveling to Egypt next week with the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, despite an earlier Likud statement that it would not participate in the visit.

At a Likud executive meeting yesterday, Likud Chairman Moshe Katsav and MK Dan Meridor said it would be a mistake not to be represented on the delegation.

"The differences of opinions with Egypt should not lead to the cutting of relations or non-participation," Katsav said. "We must maintain a dialogue with Egypt."

Liav Collins

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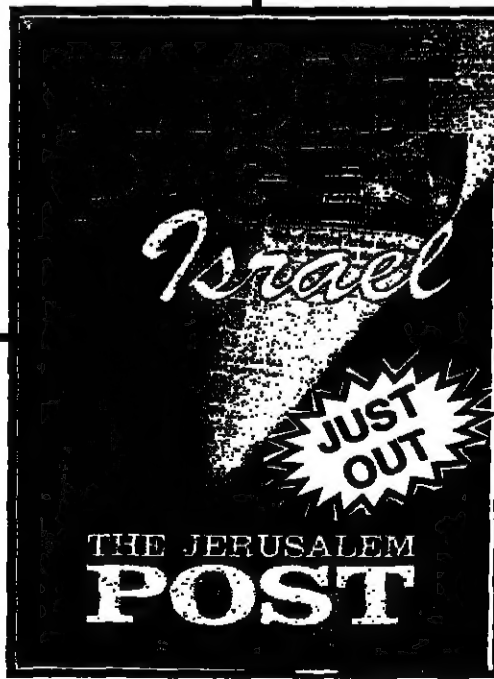
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